



HOW TO ENSURE A JUST TRANSITION IN TIMES OF INDUSTRIAL TRANSFORMATION

POLICY PROPOSALS FOR THE EU JUST TRANSITION AGENDA

ABSTRACT

If climate policies do not also consider socio-economic inequalities, implementing them will be much harder. While the EU's just transition agenda is a welcome step in this direction, this policy brief highlights several areas for improvement. Monitoring Committees play a central role in ensuring the transparent and inclusive disbursement of the Just Transition Fund, but they suffer from limitations, such as a lack of representation and technical expertise, which would call for further capacity building and increased stakeholder participation. The focus of just transition funding on preserving jobs in transitioning industries raises concerns about support for other vulnerable groups and the pace of funding, highlighting the need for measures to stem brain drain, extend funding duration and streamline access. This is especially relevant to enhance the transformative potential of just transition funding.

The proposal for a European socio-ecological welfare model aims to prevent welfare state erosion amid environmental crises by aligning with the European Pillar of Social Rights and integrating social and environmental goals. Efforts to institutionalise the just transition within the European Commission's workplan require increased involvement of decisionmakers, recognition of local contributions, and integration of long-term vision and communication strategies to fight disinformation.

While the just transition movement is composed of a variety of actors, such actors often come with diverging views. Building trust and substantive dialogue among actors, highlighting the importance of understanding local realities and identifying common ground can go a long way in advancing a coherent and more impactful agenda.



AUTHORS

KEVIN LE MERLE
PhD Fellow
United Nations University

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



FEPS
FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES



**THE FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES (FEPS)**

European Political Foundation - N° 4 BE 896.230.213
Avenue des Arts 46 1000 Brussels (Belgium)
www.feps-europe.eu
@FEPS_Europe

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG

Rue du Taciturne 38, BE-1000 Brussels (Belgium)
www.brussels.fes.de
@fes_brussels

WITH THE SUPPORT OF



CEE BANKWATCH NETWORK

Heřmanova 1088/8, Prague 7, 170 00 (Czechia)
www.bankwatch.org
@ceebankwatch



SOLIDAR

Avenue Des Arts 50 1000 Brussels (Belgium)
www.solidar.org
@Solidar_EU



This Policy Brief was produced with the financial support of the European Parliament. It does not represent the view of the European Parliament.

Copyright 2024 by FEPS and FES

Front Page Photo: [shutterstock.com/g/Alexandros_Michailidis](https://www.shutterstock.com/g/Alexandros_Michailidis)

Copy Editing: Rosalyne Cowie

Graphic Design: Downtown

Legal deposit registration number: D/2024/15396./38

ISBN: 978-2-931233-97-9

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTORS

FEPS would like to thank and acknowledge all those that participated in the organisation and knowledge gathering at the **Ensuring a Just Transition in times of industrial transformation** Meeting on 6th of December 2023, and contributed to the discussion feeding into this policy brief: Maksis Apinis, Eliza Barnea, Magda Bartecka, Mags Bird, Alexa Botár, Isabelle Brachet, Andrea Casamenti, Clara Dassonville, Claudia Detsch, Dan Dobre, Thomas Fröhlich, Béla Galgóczi, Ann-Kathrin Grunwald, Lenka Ilcikova, Joanna Jakubowska, Namita Kambli, Boglárka Király, Veni Kojouharova, Anna Kolesnichenko, Ana Kuzmanić, Robert Lange, Matteo Mandelli, Tiago Moreira Ramalho, Michael Obersteiner, Maris Pedaja, Milan Petit, David Rinaldi, Luis Sáez Jiménez, Simon Schmid, Mikhail Sirenko, Michiel Stapper, Anelia Stefanova, Miłoslawa Stępień, Sara Stojanova, Todor Todorov, Patricia Urban, Taube Van Melkebeke, Zuzana Vondrová, and Rafael Wildauer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
TRACKING AND IMPROVING MCs.....	6
Main concerns	6
Policy recommendations.....	7
ENHANCING THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF JUST TRANSITION FUNDING	7
Main concerns	8
Policy recommendations.....	8
TOWARDS A EUROPEAN SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL WELFARE MODEL?	9
Main concerns	9
Policy recommendations.....	9
INSTITUTIONALISING THE JUST TRANSITION IN THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION WORKPLAN	10
Main concerns	10
Policy recommendations.....	11
BRIDGING FAULT LINES IN JUST TRANSITION MOVEMENTS.....	11
Main concerns	11
Policy recommendations.....	12
CONCLUSION	13
Endnotes	14
About the author.....	15
About FEPS and partners	16

INTRODUCTION

The industrial transformation set about by the urgent need to decarbonise will have systemic effects on societies across the EU. The EU's policies steering such an industrial transformation, notably the Green Deal Industrial Plan, have broken a long silence on industrial policy and suggest a redoubling of efforts to meet the targets of the European Green Deal.¹ Whether it be energy systems, transport, agriculture or industry, such a transformation will entail costs in the short and medium term, and yield benefits in the longer term, thereby creating a dilemma for policymakers.² Simultaneously, it has become clear that the possibility of adopting effective climate policies in democracies is premised on sufficient public support.³ This support highly depends on an ability to distribute costs and share benefits in a just way, therefore avoiding exacerbating social tensions and reactionary social movements.⁴ Rather than suggest the costs arising from the transition are a reason to slow down progress, measures that “leave no one behind” have become essential in times of industrial transformation. Social policies, therefore,

are enablers of ecological transformation. While the EU's *just transition mechanism* is a laudable tool that acknowledges the support required, its implementation, notably in the format of *territorial just transition plans*, can be improved. By drawing on the expert inputs of a FEPS stakeholder meeting on 6 December 2023, this policy brief retraces five nodal points in the just transition debate and explores room for improvement available to policymakers and those engaging with the topic more broadly. The areas explored include (1) tracking and improving monitoring committees (MCs); (2) enhancing the transformative potential of just transition funding; (3) the role of a European socio-ecological welfare system; (4) the need to institutionalise the just transition in the new European Commission's workplan; and (5) how to bridge fault lines in just transition movements.



TRACKING AND IMPROVING MCs

MCs play a crucial role in ensuring that just transition funding is disbursed in transparent, inclusive and strategic ways. According to EU regulations, MCs are responsible for supervising the execution of operational programmes. Despite their ability to affect the distribution of funds, there is limited understanding of how these committees function and their influence. While these entities possess limited oversight capabilities and primarily focus on adhering to EU regulations, they play a crucial role in facilitating learning, sharing information, providing expert insights and fostering networking opportunities.⁵ Yet, it has been noted that MCs tend to lack balance, and participation seems to be treated as a “tick-box exercise”. MCs tasked with ensuring a transparent process were found to be too general or not targeted enough towards a just transition, which means that the representatives within them are not best suited to discuss and monitor the process. It therefore emerged that the policies concerning MCs at the national and regional levels should be reworked to ensure higher transparency and participation of various stakeholders, and there should be more integration of different funds and strategies for more effective coordination. This section outlines solutions that could help improve the functioning of MCs, notably by identifying good practices that can be used in the MCs for cohesion policy funds in the 2021-2027 period and how their functioning can be improved.

Main concerns

There is a growing need for progress on just transition related topics, but officials dedicated to the topic are few and far between, indicating a need to expand public capacities where too few officials are mandated to deal with the social implications of industrial transformation. This issue is exacerbated in small municipalities, which struggle to find the technical assistance they require, although many of the effects of the transformations are being felt locally. The level of technicality of MC meetings calls for a highly specialised focus, which is sometimes lacking in MCs’ members.

The setup of the MCs is at times at odds with their objectives. Notably, the composition of members often fails to be representative enough, and where they are representative, members sometimes lack capacity and therefore do not take a substantive role in decision-making processes. This indicates MCs are grappling with the challenges of implementing partnership principles in practice.

In Romania, for example, the relationship between the green non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the government has improved; however, only two NGOs are present at MCs. Such a setup is at risk of leveraging NGOs in a tokenistic fashion. In Hungary, women and progressive businesses have increased their participation, but, in general, this remains very limited. Youth are not represented and women’s associations are not very active.

These examples also illustrate some issues regarding civil society involvement in MCs, notably the lack of adequate resources for civil society to prepare for such meetings, and the lack of compensation for the valuable expertise they bring to the table. As such, NGO participants are often seen as “free experts”, who should dedicate a lot of time to certain technical issues with no or little compensation.

A lack of substantive opportunities for proper engagement in practice is of concern, especially if there are very few opportunities to comment and civil society acts as a passive legitimising audience rather than having a say. In some instances, the input meetings for MCs have also not been frequent enough (twice a year in Hungary, and once a year in Estonia). This could underline the issue of lacking capacities for the efficient disbursement of EU funds.

Policy recommendations

- Members of MCs would benefit from further internal training to facilitate and build the capacities of participants in the MC. To facilitate the work of MCs, summaries targeted at policymakers would prove beneficial, as well as an increased amount of preparation time, with a 15 working day benchmark. A rota of experts could also be set up to provide the full range of relevant expertise on just transition processes to committee members.
- To solve the representativeness issues at the heart of the composition of MCs, there is a need to push for more awareness on why wide representation of stakeholders and public participation is important.
- More meaningful participation would be helped by increasing the frequency of meetings, especially in countries where few meetings are held.
- Compensation for participation in the processes of MCs would symbolically help increase the value and preparedness of civil society inputs.
- The creation of thematic subcommittee meetings with clear mandates could also help funnel relevant expertise in clearer ways, provided subcommittees also coordinated these inputs further down the line.
- Close collaboration between MCs and the European Commission's geographical units has been identified as one best-practice example. A notable example of this is Romania, where discussions with the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy helped to heighten ambitions of the MC.

ENHANCING THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF JUST TRANSITION FUNDING

The word transition is used to describe gradual yet fundamental social, technological and economic changes in societies.⁶ The word transformation is often used to describe a more radical political change within societies. The goal of making the member states of the EU climate neutral by 2050 can be categorised as an economic and environmental transition.⁷ The goal of achieving this through the principle of leaving no one behind and a just transition can be seen as a societal and political transformation.

Based on research tracking the formulations of territorial just transition plans, it was found the just transition therein seemed to be mainly aimed at preserving jobs in industries and businesses by decarbonising them or making citizens more resilient. Most social policies are directed to support economic goals.⁸ This raises the question of what kind of policies are envisioned for the already unemployed and marginalised.⁹

This section focuses on ways in which the transformative potential of just transition funding can be enhanced to deliver on the objectives of leaving no one behind, while tackling the environmental and climate crisis. The possibility of social and political transformation unlocked by just transition funding has not yet been fully tapped, and more could be done to create convergence between the disbursement of funds and the fight against social inequalities. The geographical and thematic focus of just transition funding means it could be a key tool to ensure climate action and social justice go hand in hand.

Main concerns

While support for miners is at the heart of the disbursement of just transition funding, it seems other vulnerable groups likely to be impacted by the transition do not stand to benefit from as much support as they need. Here, the issue of administrative capacity emerges. The dearth of capacity at the regional level means there is a lack of practitioners in the field drafting proposals for transformative projects. While technical assistance is useful, issues of brain drain, compounded by a history of underfunding at the regional level exacerbates such issues. It also appears that access to funding often correlates with the size of organisations applying, often due to their capacity to absorb and spend funding, which is itself linked to their developed and well-established infrastructure. This is a structural issue in the disbursement of EU funds in general,^{10,11,12} but particularly problematic on issues of the just transition, for which civil society actors are particularly well-equipped to understand societal needs thanks to their fieldwork, and they have a track record in tackling such needs with more limited resources, whether it be through educational or community-focused projects. As such, there is a risk that selected projects do not fulfil apt environmental sustainability conditions (such as do no significant harm) or effectively tackle social issues.¹³ Indeed, it is important that, in responding to the climate crisis, we do not deepen the biodiversity crisis or create other major issues. Additionally, the generic recommendations of Article 8 of the Just Transition Fund do not provide enough detail for the most-pressing social issues of specific countries and regions to receive priority in the disbursement of funds.

An issue also arises in terms of the pace of funding. While the climate and environmental crises are urgent, the ecological and social transformation needed will be a long process. Yet, 70% of just transition funding will need to be allocated by 2026. This poses significant risks for the mismanagement of public funding and the potential of large sums going to mega-projects that do not deliver the necessary results for the worst-impacted communities. Such failings further risk

going unreported due to insufficient transparency and information, therefore failing to break the status quo and enforce strict guardrails for funds to go in the direction of cleantech and transformative social projects.

Policy recommendations

- Deploy further analysis of social issues in specific countries and regions for the disbursement of funding to match existing circumstances.
- Privilege environmental projects that respect the principle of do no significant harm, to avoid replacing one environmental problem with another.
- Measures that stem brain drain and build local capacities are preferable to those that implement non-perennial technical assistance (i.e., flying in experts for short periods).
- Given the long time span of the transformation underway, it is essential that funding be continued at least until 2035, possibly extending into the new multiannual financial framework.
- To level the playing field and streamline access to funds, bureaucratic procedures should be simplified and awareness of how to access the funds should be increased.
- Improving capacity and cooperation between different actors, such as municipalities working together with affected communities to become beneficiaries, could make for a higher absorption potential by those who need funds the most. Examples of how such cooperation can prove successful can range from the village of Kněžice (Czech Republic), whose energy community is operated at the municipal level, to the Electra Energy Cooperative in Greece, which tackles energy poverty by donating a portion of production to energy-poor households.^{14,15}
- In terms of communication strategies, sharing good examples of existing projects can help change the narrative towards further action.

TOWARDS A EUROPEAN SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL WELFARE MODEL?

The crises Europe has experienced in recent years have increased inequality, poverty and social exclusion. They have also shown that countries with robust social protection systems have proven to be more resilient and capable of faster and stronger recovery.^{16,17,18} However, with the increasing scope of uncertainties created by the environmental crisis, it has become clear that a European socio-ecological welfare model would help prevent the undermining of the welfare states across Europe. By being based on a thorough implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) through concrete initiatives, such as adequate minimum wage; adequate minimum income and social protection for all, including atypical workers like platform workers, a new socio-ecological welfare model can stand the chance to equip citizens with greater resilience to better face the polycrisis and changes of our era. This section therefore focuses on the political possibilities to ensure that the industrial transformation is driven by people, thanks to strong social conditionality.

Main concerns

The new investments required by the green transformation risk creating centre-periphery dynamics, where member states and regions with greater fiscal abilities are able to concentrate industries in specific regions. This makes inequality a major concern, with the risk of certain regions and rural areas being left behind, while potentially exacerbating existing disparities between member states in the wake of the cost of living and energy crises. The transformation also poses significant challenges when it comes to transport and energy poverty. Such inequalities can also be intra-regional, calling for a reinvention of the social contract that ties regions and countries together in Europe.

While the EPSR provides a benchmark of what a minimum social standards could be, it remains enshrined in a model that is not best suited for tackling environmental objectives. Indeed, the EU's reactive

just transition approach notably glosses over issues of resource scarcity, and emphasises a restricted territorial and sectoral scope, predominantly through active labour market policies. It also comes to the fore that the EPSR is not binding, entailing gaps in a member state's national obligations aligning with it. With this comes the question of the EU's competence in social policy, and whether the costs and transformations brought about by the "green transition" might require a development of such competence to mutualise the social risks that come with large-scale transformation. Lastly, such questions of competence also entail the need to ensure EU governance improves its ability to stay attuned to local realities, and local needs, with proper engagement with citizens and stakeholders in line with the principle of subsidiarity.

Policy recommendations

- Include an eco-dimension in the EPSR to ensure that social and environmental goals work hand in hand.
- Implement redistributive measures (such as universal basic services) that ensure those hardest hit by environmental costs have the necessary support to implement adequate policies.
- Ensure access to quality education and healthcare.
- Mainstream social and environmental conditionalities in the disbursement of EU funds.
- Increase accountability of the private sector and rethink the role of governments as enablers of transformation, by guiding investments and ensuring participatory processes.
- Develop strategies to ensure the coordinated resilience of welfare states, notably by providing greater EU competence.
- Develop enforcement mechanisms.

INSTITUTIONALISING THE JUST TRANSITION IN THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION WORKPLAN

While civil society at large has rallied under the banner of a just transition, efforts to institutionalise the just transition as a priority for the Commission's future workplan are only just beginning. The future of the European Green Deal represents an opportunity to advance climate action and social justice as one coherent and mutually reinforcing agenda. While some targets are now set for environmental action, the task remains to make sure the transition to these targets is substantiated and managed in a socially fair way, which has become even more essential in the face of dissenting voices seeking to get rid of the Just Transition Fund. This section discusses concrete policy proposals that would advance a just transition, as well as actors that could support establishing transversal social and environmental conditionalities across the EU's legislations.¹⁹

Main concerns

Institutionalising the just transition would require bridging the knowledge and integration gap. Decisionmakers at EU and member state levels need to develop not only their theoretical understanding of the links between environmental and social policy, but also their ability to develop a just transition praxis. At the EU level, the participation and engagement of decisionmakers in the institutional development of a just transition needs to be improved. Simultaneously, localities still need to take greater ownership of just transition processes and wield greater agency in identifying specific challenges and potential solutions. For this to be made possible, there is a need to recognise them as drivers of a just transition.

Greater attention needs to be paid to the processes that deliver just outcomes, rather than only funding needs. Indeed, while the Just Transition Fund was designed in response to the phasing out of coal, it fails to take full stock of the range of just transition issues. EU funding alone could fall short of achieving all the needs of the socio-economic transformation, calling for measures that increase public buy in and participation.

This knowledge and integration gap is further compounded by the fragmentation of territorial funds and policies. Such fragmentation means the disbursement of funds lacks clear vision and governance in the direction of achieving social and environmental objectives. For instance, the European Semester fails to highlight the just transition. There is a need to deliver a coherent long-term goal and plan, to avoid policy uncertainty, which undermines public trust. On top of this lack of an overarching long-term vision, policies with an immediate local impact often lack the flexibility to face changing circumstances and vulnerabilities. Using fiscal policy to provide central funding for futureproof investments to achieve a more coordinated response to just transition challenges should be part of the response.

Another concern is the rise in simplistic narratives instilling fear in the necessary changes to human socio-economic systems. These often tend to correlate with those with high vested interests in maintaining the status quo, particularly due to stranded assets when it comes to fossil fuel exploitation.

To meet such push back, a key communication challenge must be faced, notably in changing public perceptions of the just transition. In public discourse, just transition policies still need to prove that they deliver just outcomes. More could be done to ensure collective interest is stressed in conversations on the just transition, rather than remaining focused only on specific subgroups. There is an increasing lack of recognition of science-based discourse, tending towards narratives based on fear. Furthermore, inequality, and its exacerbation by climate change, is insufficiently acknowledged.

Policy recommendations

- Enhance the involvement of decisionmakers in just transition initiatives and recognise the limited possibility of currently available funds to address all aspects of the just transition.
- Promote member state ownership of the topic of a just transition and recognise regional and municipal actors as key contributors. Institutions, like the European Commission and member state governments, should allocate more funding for research that can help in advancing a just transition.
- Establish a unified policy framework with a clear long-term vision, while enhancing flexibility in lower-level policies to adapt to diverse regional needs. Integrate just transition objectives into all relevant areas, such as the European Semester, while also addressing just transition objectives through their “traditional” policy domains like employment policy.
- Advocate for increased funding specifically for sustainable, futureproof projects. Strategically employ fiscal policy to support just transition initiatives, focusing on long-term sustainable investments. Ensure that central funding reaches the grassroots level effectively.
- Counter the resistance and right-wing mobilisation to keep and enhance just transition instruments by convincing democratic majorities. Develop positive counter narratives to combat misinformation (see point below).
- Revamp communication strategies to promote the just transition as a collective, justice-oriented initiative. Balance evidence-based information with emotionally appealing narratives and integrate just transition topics into broader policy discussions to enhance public understanding and support. Foster a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility in just transition efforts.

BRIDGING FAULT LINES IN JUST TRANSITION MOVEMENTS

The just transition concept was birthed by trade unions, yet it has now taken a broader resonance, and is also used by policymakers, environmental activists and academics. Therefore, the very concept of a just transition has come to mean a wide array of different things to different people. This has come with its fair share of disagreements regarding what a just transition should entail, and this lack of agreement has diluted what those pushing for a just transition could achieve.

This section aims to map the different actors of the just transition and understand their different stances, with the aim of creating the mutual understanding necessary to move forward in a coherent direction for citizens across Europe.

Main concerns

Many actors have taken up the mantle of the just transition. These include civil society organisations and trade unions of miners, as well as other sectors, researchers, the private sector, institutions, citizens, vulnerable groups, local-regional-national authorities, investors, activists, indigenous communities and many more. This wealth of different actors means that the just transition movement has become composed of many levels and heterogeneous perspectives.

With such a mix of actors come differences in defining a just transition. While trade unions usually stress the importance of taking into account the needs of workers, the provision of quality jobs and often the need to ensure coal mining regions do not fall prey to an economic bust, they have also moved to broader topics, such as the need for stability in financial conditions, work-life balance and alternative employment in cases of job loss. Trade unions have also often underlined the need to enable everyone to contribute to the transition, notably by espousing environmental practices in the day to day of their jobs, and moving workplaces towards ecological behaviours. Some actors have been more focused on community development,

where transition challenges are faced by local communities taken as a whole. Others have taken a regional focus, advocating for active labour market policies, and for relocating populations to future booming industrial centres.

In any case, the concept of a just transition is spreading and is increasingly used by society at large. Much of the literature on the just transition focuses on the implications for labour and employment, notably the concentrated pockets of job losses (coal mining and agriculture) or on the bounty of new “clean jobs”. This involves further tackling the question of quality of life and quality of work (especially in a tight labour market) and of the type of opportunities being added. However, new actors bring in topics like energy poverty and the need for rural revitalisation, amongst others.

While corporations, inspired by unions, have now begun using the term “just transition”, they often present the business case for a just transition by looking at the benefits of the transition for companies. This perhaps exemplifies how, in negotiations, some groups come with demands specific to them. Few come with demands from a broader perspective. The focus on competitiveness and maintaining productivism perhaps takes attention away from the need to switch to well-being metrics to track the progress of a just transition. While much of the debate tends to narrow down the just transition debate to meet politically vested interests, more could be done to search for synergies.

Policy recommendations

- Building trust and ensuring substantive dialogue happens between different actors is essential for a just transition to gain further political traction and public support. Such interactions need to happen beyond the representation of organisational positions and keep the collective interest in mind. The processes by which stakeholders interact need improvement to move in the direction of increasing a shared understanding.
- There is also an increasing need for researchers focused on the just transition to spend time in the field to understand and empathise with the realities of those most affected by the transformations underway.
- While political conflict can occur, more should be done to identify common ground, and build and strengthen mechanisms through which stakeholders can come to agreements.
- Developing a better understanding of the right venues and fora for discussing the just transition, such as public hearings and citizen assemblies, and ensuring that they have a bearing on decision-making could further help in bridging fault lines in just transition movements. For this, it is necessary to spread awareness of the governance of a just transition and the policy instruments deployed to reach it.

CONCLUSION

Thomas Piketty stated that “it is impossible to fight against climate change without a radical redistribution of wealth, within countries, as well as internationally”,²⁰ therefore reinforcing that, if climate policies do not address socio-economic inequalities, implementing them will be much harder. While the EU’s just transition agenda is a welcome step in this direction, this policy brief has highlighted several areas for improvement.

MCs play a central role in ensuring the transparent and inclusive disbursement of the Just Transition Fund, but they suffer from limitations, such as a lack of representation and technical expertise, which would call for further capacity building and increased stakeholder participation. The focus of just transition funding on preserving jobs in transitioning industries raises concerns about support for other vulnerable groups and the pace of funding, highlighting the need for measures to stem brain drain, extend funding duration and streamline access. This is especially relevant to enhance the transformative potential of just transition funding. The proposal for a European socio-ecological welfare model aims to prevent welfare state erosion amid environmental crises by aligning with the EPSR and integrating social and environmental goals. Efforts to institutionalise the just transition within the European Commission’s workplan require increased involvement of decisionmakers, recognition of local contributions, and integration of long-term vision and communication strategies to fight disinformation. While the just transition movement is composed of a variety of actors, such actors often come with diverging views. Building trust and substantive dialogue among actors, highlighting the importance of understanding local realities and identifying common ground can go a long way in advancing a coherent and more impactful agenda.

Endnotes

- 1 Detsch, C (2023) "Waking the sleeping beauty of European industrial policy". IPS, 16 February.
- 2 Pot, W. D., A. Dewulf and C. J. A. M. Termeer (2020) "Governing long-term policy problems: Dilemmas and strategies at a Dutch water authority". *Public Management Review*, 2(24): 255-278. DOI: 10.1080/14719037.2020.1817531
- 3 Dimmelmeier, A. (2022) "Talking Green in Europe: Lessons on re-framing the public debate on the climate crisis". Policy brief. Foundation for European Progressive Studies, 20 June.
- 4 Hayat, S. (2018) "Les Gilets Jaunes, l'économie morale et le pouvoir". 5 December.
- 5 Cartwright, A. and A. Batory (2011) "Monitoring committees in cohesion policy: Overseeing the distribution of structural funds in Hungary and Slovakia". *Journal of European Integration*, 4(34): 323-340. DOI: .1080/07036337.2011.595486
- 6 Stapper, M. (2023) "The road to a just transition: A comparative analysis of territorial just transition plans". Policy brief. Foundation for European Progressive Studies, 24 April.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Stapper, M. (2023) "The road to a just transition: A comparative analysis of territorial just transition plans".
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 "Reaction: The STEP proposal: Recovery funds and cohesion policy should not be cannibalised for financing dubious objectives". Climate Action Network Europe, 21 June 2023.
- 11 "Where does the EU money go? An analysis of the implementation of cap funds in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania". The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament, 23 February 2021.
- 12 De Groen, W. P., R. Musmeci, D. Gojsic et al. (2021) "The largest 50 beneficiaries in each EU member state of CAP and cohesion funds". Pub Affairs Bruxelles, 25 May.
- 13 "Just transition platform: Working groups: Action 2: Guidelines for selecting just transition projects". European Commission, November 2023.
- 14 "Energy Communities: A brief explainer for managing authorities in Central and Eastern Europe". REScoop, 5 May 2022.
- 15 "Just transition platform toolkit". European Commission.
- 16 Hemerijck, A. and R. Huguenot-Noël (2020) "Just transition: The pensions analogy". Social Europe, 5 February.
- 17 Hemerijck, A. and R. Huguenot-Noël (2020) "The COVID-19 welfare wake-up call". EUIdeas, 16 September.
- 18 Hemerijck, A., R. Huguenot-Noël, F. Corti et al. (2020) "Social investment now! Advancing social EU through the EU budget". Policy study. Foundation for European Progressive Studies, 31 January.
- 19 Willard, M. (2023) "CAP social conditionality: A game changer for farm workers?" arc2020, 4 October.
- 20 Piketty, T. (2022). "Thomas Piketty: 'It is impossible to seriously fight climate change without a profound redistribution of wealth'", Le Monde, 5th of November.

About the author



KEVIN LE MERLE

FWO (Research Foundation Flanders) PhD Fellow at Ghent University and United Nations University

Kevin Le Merle is a researcher and policy analyst on questions of climate, environmental, and energy justice. As a PhD Fellow, Kevin Le Merle is attached to the Department of Political and Social Sciences of Ghent University and United Nations University Institute of Comparative Regional Integration Studies, where he is carrying out his research on global distributive justice principles and applying these to the external impacts of the European Green Deal. Before joining Ghent University, Kevin worked as policy analyst for the Foundation for European Progressive Studies where he spearheaded research on Climate, Environment, and Energy Policy. His past experiences also include collaborations with the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, and United Nations University, where he authored research on the EU's climate legislation with the aim to bridge the gap between global climate justice and pragmatic policy practice.

About FEPS

The Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) is the think tank of the progressive political family at EU level. Its mission is to develop innovative research, policy advice, training and debates to inspire and inform progressive politics and policies across Europe.

FEPS works in close partnership with its 68 members and other partners -including renowned universities, scholars, policymakers and activists-, forging connections among stakeholders from the world of politics, academia and civil society at local, regional, national, European and global levels.

www.feps-europe.eu | Twitter/Instagram: @FEPS_Europe | Facebook: @FEPSEurope

About Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

The EU Office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), with its headquarters in Brussels and activities in Brussels and Strasbourg, was opened in 1973. The EU Office participates in the European integration process, backs and accompanies the interests of the Federal Republic of Germany in Europe and contributes to shaping the external relations of the European Union.

www.brussels.fes.de | Twitter: @FES_Brussels | Instagram: FES_Europe | Facebook: @FESonline

About the CEE Bankwatch Network

The CEE Bankwatch Network gathers 16 member groups in 14 countries in central and eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Russia into the largest network of grassroots, environmental and human rights groups in central and eastern Europe. CEE Bankwatch has its headquarters in Prague, Czechia, but their staff is based in offices across the region and in Brussels.

www.bankwatch.org | Twitter: @CEEBankwatch | Facebook: @CEEBankwatch

About SOLIDAR

SOLIDAR is a European network of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) with a global reach working to advance social justice through a just transition in Europe and worldwide. Our over 50 member organisations are based in 24 countries (19 of which are EU countries) and include national CSOs in Europe and abroad. Our greater family also entails partner organisations active at the international level as well as local organisations spread across more than 40 countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa. SOLIDAR represents and amplifies the voices and demands of its members and partners at the European and international level. SOLIDAR organises its work for lifelong and life-wide learning through the SOLIDAR Foundation for progressive education and citizenry participation. The network is brought together by its shared values of solidarity, equality and participation, and its mission that we achieve more together in solidarity. SOLIDAR voices the concerns of its member organisations and partners to the EU and international institutions across three main policy areas: social affairs, international cooperation, and lifelong learning.

www.solidar.org | Twitter: [@SOLIDAR_EU](https://twitter.com/SOLIDAR_EU) | Facebook: [@SOLIDAR.org](https://www.facebook.com/SOLIDAR.org)

ON SIMILAR TOPICS

POLICY BRIEF
June 2023

FEPS
FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES

IMPROVING TERRITORIAL JUSTICE

TRANSPARENCY, INCLUSIVENESS, CAPACITY BUILDING AND STRATEGY IN THE TERRITORIAL JUST TRANSITION PLANS



ABSTRACT
The EU has set the goal of achieving a just transition in which no one gets left behind. To achieve this objective, member states have created Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTTPs), which lay out the transition processes in regions particularly in need of support during the transition to a carbon-neutral economy. This policy brief showcases the lessons learnt from the TJTTP process that can and should further inform and improve other ongoing and future transition processes. It does so by exploring four key areas of interest that are crucial in ensuring effective transition processes, as well as procedural and distributive justice: transparency, inclusiveness, capacity building and strategy.

AUTHORS
INANNA TRIBUKAIT
Researcher on Socio-Ecological movements
KEVIN LE MERLE
Climate & Environment Policy Analyst

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTORS
FEPS would like to thank and acknowledge all those that participated in the organisation and knowledge gathering at the Territorial Just Transition Plans Stakeholder Meeting on 30 November 2022, and contributed to this policy brief: Andrea Casamenti, Jens Hunsbeth Schreuder, Katie Treachwell, Lorenzo Manca, Mags Bird, Miloslava Stepiel, Namita Kambli, Paul Baker, Regina Dimitrisa.

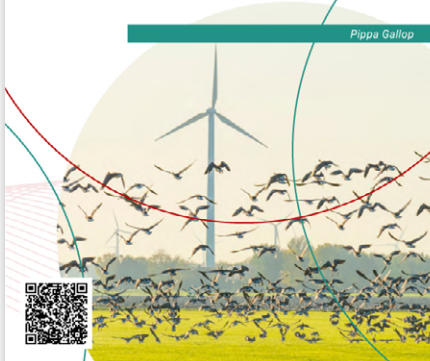
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG | CEE Bankwatch Network | solidar

RECOVERY WATCH

POLICY STUDY
July 2023

TOWARDS A RENEWABLES SCALE-UP THAT WORKS FOR NATURE

Pippa Gallop



ABSTRACT
The Recovery Watch project has produced a series of policy studies that explore the potential of the Recovery Fund to support the transition to a green economy. This study focuses on the potential of the Recovery Fund to support the transition to a green economy that works for nature. It explores the potential of the Recovery Fund to support the transition to a green economy that works for nature. It explores the potential of the Recovery Fund to support the transition to a green economy that works for nature.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG | IEV | CEE Bankwatch Network

POLICY BRIEF
April 2023

FEPS
FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES

THE ROAD TO A JUST TRANSITION

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TERRITORIAL JUST TRANSITION PLANS



ABSTRACT
This policy brief analyses the Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTTPs) of seven countries, with the aim of understanding the envisioned just transition in these regions. The brief scrutinises and evaluates the economic, environmental and social aspects of the plans to map the kind of justice to be expected from their implementation. It finds that the TJTTPs primarily direct funding towards economic policies, with the aim of supporting SMEs and large corporations to decarbonise and generate or maintain employment opportunities in the regions. There are lesser investments in environmental policies, mainly focused on the decontamination of polluted land, and social policies, such as elderly and childcare.

AUTHOR
DR MICHEL STÄPPER
Assistant Professor, Tübing Law School

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

POLICY STUDY
April 2024

EXPECTED LABOUR MARKET EFFECTS OF THE GREEN DEAL INDUSTRIAL PLAN

THE POTENTIAL OF LABOUR POLICY FOR JUST TRANSITION REGIONS

Milan Petit, Mikhail Sirenko, Michael Obersteiner, Kevin le Merle



ABSTRACT
The Green Deal Industrial Plan (GDIP) is a key component of the European Green Deal. It aims to support the transition to a green economy by providing financial support to industrial sectors. This study explores the potential of labour policy for just transition regions. It explores the potential of labour policy for just transition regions. It explores the potential of labour policy for just transition regions.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis | Project SEED | FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG