

# HOW NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP PLANS CAN SUPPORT JUST TRANSITION REGIONS IN THE NEXT MFF

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS – JUNE 2026

*By Eliza Barnea, Just Transition Campaign Coordinator at CEE Bankwatch Network*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Just Transition Fund (JTF), currently under implementation across all EU member states represents one of the most significant policy experiments of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF): a dedicated instrument with a mission-driven intervention logic, designed to accompany the structural transformation of regions dependent on carbon-intensive industries.

The European Commission's proposed 2028-2034 MFF does not renew the JTF. The just transition objective survives in name, without a ring-fenced budget, guaranteed territorial targeting or the governance requirements that gave the JTF its transformative character. Withdrawing structured public support from transition regions, at this pivotal moment for decarbonisation, threatens the EU's economic development and cohesion, undermining the social acceptability of the transition and the credibility of the EU's commitment to leave no one behind.

This policy brief argues that the National and Regional Partnership Plan (NRPP) framework can ensure that transition regions retain adequate, predictable and institutionally grounded support, contributing to the new MFF's objectives of competitiveness and resilience. To do so, it needs to integrate key innovative design features of the JTF, building on what works rather than starting from scratch. The policy brief provides concrete and actionable recommendations to improve the NRPP framework.

## KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Mandatory territorial targeting based on transition impacts

- Define just transition regions in the NRPP regulation and broaden the ring-fenced allocation for less-developed regions
- A minimum just transition threshold calibrated to member states' JTF allocation
- Mandatory regional and/or territorial chapters
- Synergies between just transition territorial and national chapters

### 2. Participatory planning and governance requirements

- Condition funding access to territorial just transition strategies
- Mandatory and territorially differentiated stakeholder representation
- Reduction of administrative and procedural burdens on managing authorities and final beneficiaries

### 3. A mission-driven approach integrating economic, social and environmental objectives

- Result indicators capturing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of territorial transformation
- Dedicated just transition indicators in Annex I of the Budget Performance and Tracking Regulation
- Practical guidance and standard methodological tools on indicators

### 4. Allocation linked to national climate commitments and long-term transformation

- Complement milestone verification with continuous governance conditionality
- Decolmitment rules calibrated to long-term objectives
- Explicit safeguards ensuring regional and local access to EU funding

### 5. A dedicated support ecosystem

- Dedicated pre-financing for territorial just transition chapters
- Build on experiences of the current JTF and maintain the JTF assistance structures
- Dedicated technical assistance to develop just transition strategic projects and investments

## 1. THE 2028-2034 MFF PROPOSAL AND THE NRPPS

While negotiations for the next European Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028-2034 are underway, progress has been slow and contentious. The European Commission's proposed budget of nearly €2 trillion – an increase from 1.14% to 1.26% of gross national income – remains essentially flat in real terms once debt servicing and inflation are accounted for.

**One of the most debated elements remains the merging of 14 previously separate funds – covering cohesion policy, Common Agricultural Policy, migration, internal security and several smaller programs – into a single fund under Heading 1, implemented through National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs).** With a proposed budget of €865 billion (roughly 44% of the total MFF), the NRPP framework shifts from a cost-based to a performance-based budgeting model, linking spending to milestones and reforms in the vein of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). A pre-programmed allocation would represent 75% of national envelopes, while 25% would constitute a flexible reserve for crisis response and evolving challenges. Under the NRPPs, 14% of a member state's allocation would be earmarked for social investments and 43% for climate and environmental objectives, excluding security and defence. Depending on the amount allocated by each member state to security and defence, this may reduce available funding for climate-related investments.

### **The NRPP proposal raises several concerns.**

Formally aiming to harmonise funding rules, enhance flexibility and strengthen performance, the NRPP proposal presents a restructuring and effective downsizing of cohesion and agricultural funds. Compared to the whole cohesion envelope of 2021-2027 (adjusted to 2025 prices), this marks a reduction in funding of roughly 15%<sup>1</sup> for cohesion objectives, at a time when inequality and the cost-of-living crisis continue to fuel anti-democratic and Eurosceptic sentiment. This change risks going against one of the main new priorities of the European budget – strengthening resilience – and undercutting decades of efforts aimed at reducing development disparities between regions.

While the proposal outlines the provisions for ensuring the continuation of multi-level governance and the partnership principle, central governments possess significant discretionary powers in the planning of the NRPPs. This could translate into the marginalisation or even exclusion of regional and territorial chapters from NRPPs, with the risk of allocation being based on political criteria rather than development needs. The foreseen obligation of central governments to plan in line with the partnership principle and address regional challenges is a weak substitute for a binding chapter and a ring-fenced allocation, designated managing authority, and direct contact with the Commission. This reduces regional participation to a consultative input rather than a structural role in the delivery architecture.

## 2. FORGETTING JUST TRANSITION REGIONS?

**The proposed changes in the governance and financing architecture of the MFF are particularly impactful for just transition regions.** While Article 3 of the NRPP Regulation outlines the objective of "a just transition towards the Union's 2030, 2040 and 2050 energy and climate targets", the Just Transition

Fund (JTF) has been scrapped from the proposal of the next European budget. Moreover, the scope of the just transition has been narrowed down to its links with the energy dimension (Art. 3.1 (iii)), obscuring the socio-economic, environmental and localised impacts of this structural transformation. Created in

2021 with a budget of €19.7 billion and the aim of "alleviating, for the most affected territories, the economic, environmental and social costs of the transition towards climate neutrality by 2050",<sup>2</sup> the JTF is currently under implementation in all member states, across 96 different territories. It supports investments in economic diversification, R&I, renewable energy and environmental infrastructure, sustainable mobility, digitalisation, support for a workforce transition, a circular economy, or social inclusion.<sup>3</sup>

**A combination of factors, including the requirement to prepare Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTPs) and the low administrative capacity of targeted territories, led to a slow start of the implementation phase.** The preparation phase was marked by a generally low political accountability of the transition process from national governments and competing priorities between the negotiation of National Recovery and Resilience Plans and the Partnership Agreements of the current financing period. After the European Commission's approval of most of the TJTPs by end of 2022, project selection and implementation has progressed and accelerated. By the end of 2025, JTF project selection had reached 58.4% of the total EU allocation, up from 6.2% in December 2023, yet actual disbursements to project implementers stood at just 9.1%. This structural implementation lag is well documented by cohesion policy research, where legal commitments accumulate faster than certified expenditure, particularly in regions with weaker administrative capacity.<sup>4</sup>

**The absorption rate of the JTF is a poor evaluation metric, providing an incomplete image of both the whole-of-society nature of decarbonisation and the transformative impact of the JTF.** Historically mono-industrial, the regions undergoing decarbonisation were, for the first time, supported by a dedicated EU instrument specifically designed for planning a structural transformation, with funding tied to investments demonstrably linked to transition pathways rather than broader regional development indicators alone. In some cases, it was the first time that sub-NUTS3 territories received a transition-

specific dedicated stream of European funding. The funding, complemented by technical assistance and knowledge-sharing platforms, has stemmed the development of local institutional capacity, broadened stakeholder involvement in transition governance, and catalysed the first generation of transformative investments anchored in long-term decarbonisation planning and sustainable economic development. In East Central Europe, the fund has carried an even more significant weight, providing for the first time a planned, resourced and institutionally supported framework for the continuation of structural transformation that started with the transition to the market economy. This stood in stark contrast to the post-1989 transition, when the collapse of carbon-intensive industries left structural deficits in employment, demographics and institutional capacity that continue to this day to depress development indicators across the region.

**The discontinuation of the JTF from the next European budget comes at a time when regions had just managed to initiate the development of the institutional capacities and participatory practices needed to carry out the generational process of transitioning away from carbon-intensive industries.** Moreover, in the case of coal regions, commitments regarding energy infrastructure, workforce retraining and economic diversification were explicitly designed to run across multiple MFF periods, with 13 of 27 member states having committed to phase-out dates post-2027, including the biggest JTF beneficiaries and most affected member states, Poland, Germany and Romania. In this context, continued funding and regulatory predictability would be essential for sustaining transition efforts, reinforcing public acceptance of the transition, and attracting the private investment needed to bridge the gap between available public financing and the scale of investment required to meet EU strategic objectives. The continued support for regions in transition is directly aligned with the simplification agenda of the proposed 2028-2034 European budget by building on and consolidating the local institutional capacity the JTF has catalysed, and reinforcing trust in EU institutions and their commitment to leave no one behind at a time of increased populist backlash.

**Instead of starting from scratch, the proposed NRPPs should build on key design features of the JTF with which recipients are already familiar. In particular, five innovative JTF features can underpin the reformative ambitions of the NRPPs.** The following section explores how these could be integrated into the NRPP framework and, therefore, sustain essential support for just transition regions.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Mandatory territorial targeting based on transition impacts

**Perhaps one of the most innovative policy design elements introduced by the JTF was the targeted territorial approach built around transition exposure.** Unlike traditional cohesion policy funding, which looks at regional GDP per capita relative to the EU average, the share of a member state's allocation of the JTF was directly linked to social, economic and climate criteria. This approach goes beyond GDP, which can obscure extreme intra-regional distributional variance and environmental damage, to include greenhouse gas emissions, the production of peat or oil shale, or employment in the industry of concern.<sup>5</sup>

**The JTF, therefore, links financing with an approved TJTP, an anticipatory assessment of structural decline.** All investments need to demonstrate a link with transition pathways, expected negative impacts, and challenges and needs in the most affected territories. This approach touches upon the efficiency of resource use, pre-empting the socio-economic impacts of decarbonisation and industrial transformation, rather than addressing potentially higher costs ex post. Moreover, since the impacts of industrial transformation are highly spatially concentrated, the territorial focus at NUTS3 or even sub-NUTS3 level of the JTF allows support to be targeted where it is most needed. This improves the capacity of funding to address intra- and inter-regional development disparities, in line with cohesion objectives, and brings EU policy closer to previously hard-to-reach groups.

Despite these considerations, **the current NRPP proposal outlines regional and territorial chapters as**

Continued and well-designed support for transition regions and the strategic valorisation of their competitive advantages, from their pool of technical workforce to their renewable energy potential, can turn transition regions into key actors in advancing Europe's resilience, competitiveness and security agenda.

**optional** and foresees a ring-fenced allocation solely for less-developed regions (LDR, NUTS2). This allocation is based on an average GDP per capita ratio of under 75% of the EU average, leaving support for transition or more-developed regions subject to the discretion of national governments.<sup>6</sup> This raises a twofold concern. Firstly, many territories currently benefitting from the JTF are not less developed when measured solely by GDP per capita but remain vulnerable to high exposure to transition costs. Upper Silesia in Poland, for example, had a GDP per capita of 79% of the EU average in 2023,<sup>7</sup> while providing direct and indirect employment to around 100,000 people in the coal sector.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, given the localised impacts of decarbonisation, the structural decline of industrial activity in NUTS3 or sub-NUTS3 territories currently targeted by the JTF could be rendered invisible at the NUTS2 level, with the risk of compounding intra-regional disparities and reversing advancements made at the local level in the public acceptance of decarbonisation. With a minimum ring-fenced allocation of €218 billion in the proposed NRPP Regulation, support for less-developed regions has been cut in real terms, with transition and more-developed regions bearing a disproportionate share of the reduction in current cohesion policy funding.

**NRPPs can ensure the continuation of adequate and predictable support for transition regions by integrating four elements:**

1. **A definition of just transition regions should be included in Art. 4 of the NRPP Regulation.** The ring-fenced allocation for less developed regions should be broadened to include transition regions and be supplemented with additional funding<sup>9</sup>
2. **A minimum just transition earmarking threshold should be established for each NRPP and**

calibrated to each member state's JTF allocation as a share of its total cohesion envelope in the 2021-2027 period.

3. **Regional and/or territorial chapters should be mandatory and transition regions should be covered by these chapters.** The regional or territorial nature would depend on the administrative structure of the member state. For territories currently supported by the JTF, strategies should be based on the updated versions of the TJTPs. Strategies for territories not covered by the current TJTPs should be developed based on an anticipatory assessment of the socio-economic impacts of the transition and in alignment with the priorities of the next financing period.
4. **Synergies should be created between just transition territorial and national chapters,** especially on cohesion, skills and competitiveness, to harmonise local implementation and national level decision-making. This would require that national chapters include a territorial dimension identifying how national strategic investments will be prioritised in eligible transition territories, and that territorial just transition strategies explicitly map their investments against the strategic objectives of the national chapter, demonstrating their contribution to national competitiveness or industrial transformation goals.

### Participatory planning and governance requirements

In complementarity with territorial targeting, the JTF introduced a **set of governance-related elements that significantly contributed to consolidating local capacity for strategic planning, ownership of decarbonisation and increased participation in decision-making:**

- The mandatory TJTPs embedded an **ex-ante planning discipline that conditions access to funding to the development and approval of an integrated, territory-specific transition strategy** developed in line with the National Energy and Climate Plan and respecting the partnership and governance provisions of the Common

Provisions Regulation (CPR). This requirement contributed simultaneously to the harmonisation of transition planning and national energy policy, the consolidation of local capacity, and the anchoring of investments in local specificities and long-term decarbonisation trajectories rather than short-term absorption pressures.

- **The partnership principle was operationalised with particular structural force in the JTF.** Social and economic partners, local and regional authorities, and civil society were guaranteed a role in the diagnosis of transition challenges and in the identification and operationalisation of investment priorities, through participation in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the TJTPs. Nevertheless, additional efforts will be needed in the next programming period to all funding subject to the application of the partnership principle to tackle persistent barriers to meaningful participation, such as short deadlines for reviewing documentation, insufficient notice for reunions, and inaccessible and overly bureaucratic language in planning and program documents.
- Finally, in line with CPR provisions, **multi-level governance** through coordination across national, regional and local administrative tiers was structurally required in both the planning and implementation phases.

**By contrast, the NRPP proposal dilutes these governance gains by weakening the structural link between place-based planning and dedicated funding access.** Equally, while simplification is a legitimate and necessary objective, increasing the distance between affected communities and decisionmakers can reduce the territorial relevance and effectiveness of investments.

This concern is compounded by the structural accountability gap that would be created by shifting away from separate regional allocations, direct managing authority status and program-level monitoring committees. According to Articles 49 and 54 of the proposed NRPP Regulation, member states may identify one or more managing authorities and

establish one or more monitoring committees covering one or more chapters of the Plan, leaving the governance architecture almost entirely to national discretion. This creates a structural tension. On one hand, if a member state creates one chapter per region and transition territory to preserve meaningful regional ownership and territorially specific monitoring, it replicates a fragmentation that the NRPP architecture seeks to address. On the other hand, if a member state opts for a single chapter for all regions, these regions would operate under one managing authority and one monitoring committee, making it structurally impossible for the partnership principle to function in a meaningful sense. Indeed, the heterogeneous challenges of different regions cannot be adequately deliberated or monitored through a single national framework with spatially-blind milestones and targets. Moreover, a single monitoring committee of viable size cannot meaningfully represent the full diversity of local stakeholders across multiple territories, inevitably reducing regional and community voices to token representation within a nationally aggregated governance structure.

**The NRPP Regulation should preserve and strengthen the planning and governance innovations of the JTF as follows:**

1. **The approval of territorial just transition strategies should be an ex-ante condition for accessing earmarked funding within the NRPP.** These strategies should be developed in line with national energy and climate planning frameworks, respect the partnership and multi-level governance provisions of the CPR, and demonstrate a coherent link between territorial investments and long-term decarbonisation trajectories.
2. **Monitoring committees of chapters covering transition territories should include mandatory, territorially differentiated stakeholder representation,** ensuring that social and economic partners, local and regional authorities, and civil society organisations from each eligible transition territory have a guaranteed and

meaningful role in the deliberation, monitoring and evaluation of investments.

3. **The simplification agenda should be pursued through the reduction of administrative and procedural burdens on managing authorities and final beneficiaries,** including through front-loaded technical assistance, proportionate reporting requirements and spending deadlines.

### **A mission-driven approach integrating economic, social and environmental objectives**

**The JTF was designed around a single, clearly defined mission – alleviate the socio-economic impacts of the transition to climate neutrality in specific affected territories.** This departs from mainstream cohesion policy architecture, which pursues multiple broad policy objectives simultaneously, making it structurally difficult to isolate the contribution of any single intervention to any specific result. The definition of a concrete, measurable and time-bound mission can underpin effective governance by shaping the directionality of investment, coalescing actors across sectors and governance levels, and improving the efficiency of resource allocation.<sup>10</sup> Through its narrowly defined mission, the JTF operationalises this logic, ensuring that every eligible investment is justified against the same territorial transition challenge rather than dispersed across broad objectives of regional development. Through their TJTPs, member states must demonstrate how investments related to economic diversification, employment, skills, energy and environmental remediation collectively constitute a coherent response to their transition challenges.

This integrated approach operates on two levels. Firstly, **the economic, social and ecological dimensions of decarbonisation are treated as components of a single territorial response rather than competing priorities,** one of the fund's most significant design innovations. Secondly, as highlighted by the European Committee of the Regions,<sup>11</sup> just transition occupies a unique institutional space at the intersection of cohesion, industrial and climate policy, explicitly integrating the

territorial, technological and social dimensions of industrial transformation into a single place-based intervention logic, a precondition for meeting the competitiveness and resilience objectives of the proposed 2028-2034 MFF.

In addition, **the JTF approach creates more credible preconditions for evaluating both the long-term outcomes of EU funding and the coherence between strategic objectives.** The defined causal link between territorial investments and industrial transformation or transition outcomes allows for the use of result-level indicators. Result-level indicators are very useful in the case of decarbonisation, as low-carbon economy investments are among the most difficult to capture through conventional output metrics.<sup>12</sup> They also counterbalance the limitations of the output-level reporting that has historically dominated cohesion performance frameworks. For example, output-level reporting does not provide insight into the long-term effects of investments, especially in the case of structural transformation. In addition, a disproportionate focus on outputs correlates with absorption pressures that prioritise measurable disbursement over transformative impact. A telling illustration is Galați in Romania, where investments in electric heating systems in public institutions met output targets on decarbonisation while, in practice, shifting energy costs from gas to electricity and, ultimately, increasing energy costs for end users. Output indicators failed to capture the real-world impact of the investments.

**Preserving the JTF's mission-driven, integrated intervention logic in the post-2027 framework would contribute to a better implementation of performance-based budgeting.** It would ensure that resources were effectively directed towards addressing structural territorial challenges and delivering transformative impacts.

1. The NRPP Regulation should require that **investments under the just transition specific objective of Article 3(1)(c) be evaluated against an integrated set of result indicators capturing the integrated nature of territorial transformation.** This should be introduced in Annex I of the Budget Performance and Tracking

Regulation and designed around NUTS3-level socio-economic and ecological results, including economic diversification, decent employment in new sectors, energy cost impacts on end users or support for vulnerable groups.

2. The Commission should complement this with **practical guidance and standard methodological tools to help managing authorities** define realistic result indicators, establish consistent and transparent payout values for transition-related investments under the performance-based model, and design milestone frameworks that reflect the longer time horizons, higher uncertainty and experimental nature of transition investments.
3. Given the limited resources and multiple priorities of the NRPPs, **other instruments should be mobilised to multiply the impact of public investment in transition territories.** Considering the upcoming revision of the EU Public Procurement Directives, public procurement in eligible territories can be leveraged strategically to complement direct investment and advance transition objectives. With an annual value of €616 billion,<sup>13</sup> public procurement represents a demand-side instrument of considerable scale. By embedding green and social award criteria in publicly funded contracts, contracting authorities in transition territories can stimulate local demand for clean products and services, create employment opportunities, and build the local innovation capacity and supply chains that are preconditions for attracting and sustaining private investment where market signals alone are insufficient.

### Allocation linked to national climate commitments and long-term transformation

**Article 10 of the JTF Regulation tied access to the full funds to the adoption of the EU 2050 climate neutrality objective in national legislation.** Rather than concentrating conditionality at a single disbursement trigger, as is the case in the performance-based model, it distributed it across the implementation cycle by subjecting non-programmed

allocations to annual decommitment in the absence of an ongoing national climate commitment. With the extension of the performance-based model to the NRPP, which concentrates accountability at a single, verifiable moment of formal delivery and disburses funds upon certification of that delivery, the JTF approach could beneficially complement the performance-based model to ensure sustainability of delivery over time. Indeed, under the performance-based model, a milestone can be formally achieved, but not translate into sustained delivery over time, while also not triggering any recovery or conditionality mechanism. The governance processes, institutional functions and implementation commitments derived from the milestones extend well beyond the moment of formal compliance, and such a disbursement mechanism provides little leverage over what happens after the money is released.

**The extension of the performance-based logic of the RRF to the post-2027 cohesion framework in the NRPP and the ambiguous provisions regarding durability and reversal of results, risk replicating this vulnerability at scale.** This can create a system in which transition-related commitments are formally verified and funded at a single point in time, without the continuous governance conditionality that accompanies sustained structural change.

1. **NRPPs need to build on the Article 10 logic of the JTF, complementing milestone verification with continuous governance conditionality.** This ensures that formally achieved commitments are institutionally sustained over time and in line with EU long-term decarbonisation trajectories. To align disbursement with sustained delivery, decarbonisation and just transition milestones can be structured in defined implementation phases, from planning and governance to investment deployment and consolidation of results, with payments corresponding to each phase. In addition, for territories with significant economic dependency on phasing-out sectors like coal, access to the full just transition allocation should be conditioned on a legally binding national phase-out commitment for the

sector, consistent with EU 2040 and 2050 climate targets.

2. For less-developed and transition regions and territories, **rules on the decommitment of funds should be differentiated to reflect the longer time horizons of structural economic transformation**, ensuring that managing authorities are not incentivised to prioritise easily certifiable outputs over more complex and transformative investments. The proposed N+1 decommitment rule is significantly stricter than the current N+3 rule under cohesion policy. According to Article 15, unspent funds can be automatically cancelled or withdrawn if not used by "31 October of the calendar year following the year of the budgetary commitment". This risks undermining the long implementation timelines of transition processes and disproportionately penalise territories with lower administrative capacity. Decommitment rules should be calibrated to the achievement of long-term objectives, rather than flexibility derived from short-term absorption pressures.
3. The rule of law and fundamental rights horizontal provisions of Articles 8 and 9 should be complemented by an **explicit safeguard ensuring that regional and local stakeholders retain access to EU funding even in the case of a breach attributable to the national government.**

### A dedicated support ecosystem

**The delivery of the JTF was supported by a solid infrastructure of capacity-building instruments and knowledge-sharing platforms that significantly contributed to enhancing connectivity and learning across just transition regions, stimulating cooperation and building capacity.** The JTFPlatform Conference brought together stakeholders from just transition regions, creating a common space for exchange on shared challenges and solutions. The JTFPeers region-to-region exchanges, JTF Groundwork technical assistance and Expert Database supported the cooperation of regions around common objectives and facilitated access to knowledge and dedicated technical support. The Coal

Regions in Transition Initiative provided a dedicated space for region-specific technical assistance, peer learning and stakeholder engagement in coal+ territories, supporting them in overcoming challenges associated with the transition.

**Equally important, the technical assistance provisions of the JTF, allocated as a fixed percentage of the program envelope and available from the beginning of implementation,** provided program authorities, regional and local partners with a dedicated stream of administrative support independent of the pace of project selection or expenditure certification. This front-loaded availability was a critical enabler for territories with lower capacity, allowing them to invest in programming expertise, monitoring systems and stakeholder engagement before the operational implementation of projects began.

Under a performance-based disbursement model, the NRPP framework only proposes a technical assistance rate of 3% applied to each payment request and disbursed when payment applications are submitted and approved. This poses the risk that **no technical assistance budget is available at the start of the programming period, precisely when institutional capacity needs are greatest and managing authorities are building the governance**

**infrastructure for implementation.** This front-loading problem will be most acute in territories with the weakest administrative capacity and the highest need for support to achieve milestones.

1. To ensure support at the start of the programming period, **a dedicated pre-financing provision should be set for territorial just transition chapters,** equivalent to a fixed percentage of the total chapter envelope, independently of milestone achievement and payment certification.
2. The new NRPP framework should **build on the experiences of the current JTF and maintain the JTF structures for technical assistance,** peer learning and exchange, and adapting the services provided to the evolving needs of the regions.
3. A dedicated layer of technical assistance should **support transition territories in developing strategic projects and investments aligned with the competitiveness and industrial transformation objectives of the NRPP and the European Competitiveness Fund.** This would build on their territorial competitive advantages, industrial infrastructure and workforce specialisations to identify and develop investment proposals with high added value in sectors relevant for the next financing period

## FURTHER READING

["Key recommendations for investing in a just transition in the EU budget for 2028-2034"](#). European Alliance for a Just Transition, April 2026.

["Aligning the EU's budget tracking framework for 2028–2034 with social, climate and just transition goals"](#). European Alliance for a Just Transition, April 2026.

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["Protecting the just transition in the EU's proposed national and regional partnership plans"](#). CEE Bankwatch, March 2026.

["Towards a just transition in the national and regional partnership plans: Recommendations on regional chapters"](#). CEE Bankwatch, June 2026.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>10</sup> Mazzucato, M. (2018) "Mission-oriented innovation policies: Challenges and opportunities". *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 5(27): 803-815. DOI: [10.1093/icc/dty034](#)
- <sup>11</sup> Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (2024) "[A just transition for all EU regions: Opinion factsheet](#)". European Committee of the Regions, 8 October.
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Project coordinators: Chloé Deffet (FEPS) and Adrea Casamenti (SOLIDAR)

Project officer: Luis Sáez Jiménez (FEPS)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eliza Barnea is a policy professional specialised in just transition, energy poverty and sustainable development, with experience spanning from government to civil society and international organisations in Romania and the EU. She currently serves as Just Transition Campaign Coordinator at CEE Bankwatch Network and recently led the country team supporting the Romanian Government in developing its National Social Climate Plan.

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European Political Foundation – No BE 869.230.213  
Avenue des Arts 46 – 1000 Brussels (Belgium)  
info@feps-europe.eu  
[www.feps-europe.eu](http://www.feps-europe.eu)  
@FEPS\_Europe

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