

# HOW CAN WE ASSIST YOU?

WHAT KINDS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DO JUST TRANSITION REGIONS ACTUALLY NEED?

EUROPE  
BEYOND  
COAL

## **ABOUT THIS BRIEFING**

**This briefing was issued by the Europe Beyond Coal campaign in July 2022.**

Europe Beyond Coal is an alliance of civil society groups working to ensure a just transition to a fossil-free, fully renewables-based European energy sector. This means exiting coal entirely by 2030 at the latest, and fossil gas by 2035 in the power sector. We devote our time and resources to this independent campaign because we are committed to seeing a European energy system that protects people, nature and our global climate: [www.beyond-coal.eu](http://www.beyond-coal.eu)

### **The following individuals contributed to this briefing:**

Miłosława Stępień (lead author)  
Katie Treadwell (author).

### **Cover photography:**

© Greg McNevin

### **For enquiries, please contact:**

Miłosława Stępień – Just Transition Coordinator, CEE Bankwatch Network  
[miloslawa.stepien@bankwatch.org](mailto:miloslawa.stepien@bankwatch.org)

Katie Treadwell – Senior Energy Policy Officer, WWF European Policy Office  
[ktreadwell@wwf.eu](mailto:ktreadwell@wwf.eu)





# How can we assist you?

## What kinds of technical assistance do Just Transition regions actually need?

### Introduction

When talking about the just transition process, we need to look at the big picture, keeping in mind its general goals. We should perhaps state the obvious. What we are doing is a grand undertaking! We are attempting to transition entire regions, phasing out what is sometimes their main source of income (entailing the complete redirection of the economy), wanting to leave no one behind (i.e., creating new job opportunities, new branches of the economy, while maintaining a good quality of life) and striving towards a sustainable, green and climate-neutral economy (requiring the introduction of structural and systemic change to entire chunks of the social and economic structure).

All this requires both a systemic approach aimed at providing comprehensive and overarching strategies, but also providing detailed, tailor-made and co-designed support for smaller stakeholders so that it really is a just transition, leaving no one behind. It is a grand undertaking, meaning we need to constantly monitor and adapt to what issues occur on the ground, and also be innovative in how we approach the encountered problems. We, as NGOs working on the ground in the different Just Transition regions, have direct access to information about what is working and what is not, but do not have the capacity to answer all of the needs we identify, which is why we bring these issues also to your attention, in hopes we can find solutions together.

More than two years into the development of the Territorial Just Transition Plans, we continue to see gaps in adequate preparation for both the overall just transition process and for individual projects responding to particular challenges. Local stakeholders, among them local governments, are repeatedly doing what they can to prepare for the most effective use of Just Transition funds. But past experience may not be enough to meet the magnitude of the challenges posed by just transition.

### Summary of main asks

The Europe Beyond Coal campaign draws on the expertise and experience of its network of civil society organisation partners to understand the challenges and needs to implement a just transition in Europe's coal regions. The following calls for technical assistance and targeted support are addressed to the EU level, but **action and commitment is also needed from the national governments**, and collaboration with all efforts at the regional and local level will be required for the process to be successful.



Most of the support we propose here focuses on rendering information and processes relevant and accessible to smaller stakeholders on the ground, and boosting their capacity to engage in the just transition. In this way, the quality and inclusiveness of the just transition process will be enhanced.

The main asks can be summarised as follows:

**1. Technical assistance and support must be provided at the regional level, and not just at the national level.**

This should include dedicated assistance in the regions (**call 1**: establishing regional just transition support centres). This is even more important in the current context where the war in Ukraine has placed additional burdens on many regions in transition, particularly in central and eastern Europe, where the focus on energy security is driving rapid energy policy shifts and a further acceleration of the transition.

**2. Urgent and substantial technical assistance and support to engage in the just transition process and to develop and implement just transition projects is needed and must be targeted at small stakeholders on the ground.** Dedicated personnel (**call 2**) and capacity assistance (**call 3**) is needed to support the inclusive development of high-quality just transition plans and projects in the just transition regions. Without this, smaller actors will be disadvantaged and unable to engage as effectively in the transition as large, often incumbent interests, in turn undermining the fairness of the process and its outcomes. **The language and provision of technical assistance and support should be designed to be relevant and applicable to the context of small stakeholders on the ground in just transition regions (call 4)**

The European Commission should also provide assistance to regions to monitor the just transition process and accelerate its implementation to respond to the parallel urgency to tackle energy security and climate action concerns in a socially fair and sustainable way (**call 5**).

Many of the asks and recommendations below are complementary. For instance, the dedicated technical assistance to smaller actors could and should form part of the provision of one-stop-shop style 'regional just transition support centres'. But each is of equal importance to meet the scale and urgency of the just transition challenge in Europe today.

Finally, it is pivotal that the Commission steps up efforts and assistance to accelerate the approval of the Territorial Just Transition Plans (**call 6**). The war in Ukraine underlines the importance of the transition to secure energy production, while the recent IPCC reports underline the necessity to uphold the EU's Paris Agreement Commitments. These goals go hand in hand: energy security and climate action, but they will not be fully achieved if social justice is left by the wayside. There is a real risk regions will miss out on vital just transition funding due to both chronic and acute issues (due to the war in Ukraine and ongoing response to the covid-19 pandemic). The European Commission should launch additional support to accelerate the approval of plans before the end of 2022, without compromising on their quality.



## NEED: Establish Regional Just Transition Support Centres.

### What would this entail?

Regional Just Transition Support Centres would be points where all local and regional stakeholders would be provided with information, support and assistance with anything they require in order to ensure the transition process runs smoothly. These 'one stop shops' in the regions could provide information about the funding available at European, national and regional level to support just transition (within the Just Transition Mechanism, but also other sources and their conditions).

Local or regional centres would be able to target information specifically to the regional audience and particularly to smaller stakeholders to make sure it is relevant for them. There is a lack of knowledge in the regions on how to translate the principles of just transition into concrete JTF-funded activities. First and foremost, it is important to provide support for the programming of the Fund and on which specific projects may be eligible for it. Moreover, many local governments applying for support from the European Funds need assistance in writing projects. Officials from smaller municipalities and other small stakeholders frequently have little experience in effective project writing as compared to officials from large urban centres. Therefore, smaller municipalities and communities cannot be left alone with this task.

Regional Just Transition Centres should take the initiative both in spreading technical knowledge and in developing just transition projects. They should organise workshops and meetings with experts. Local actions have an additional importance - they will help to identify problems that are not visible from the central level. With the efficient implementation of the tasks described above, the regional centres would become entities able to animate actions to face the problems these regions tackle on an on-going basis.

It is also important for these centres to also be staffed by qualified personnel from the individual regions, as they are the ones who best know the specifics of the supported area and thus will be able to provide unique and valuable advice on how to act according to local needs. Regional offices in particular should provide technical and expert assistance that reaches every municipality in the given region. Coordination of such activities is very important in order to help the less prosperous municipalities with the highest number of people connected to the phased-out industry. This would level the playing field between smaller and larger municipalities, which will largely determine whether the transition will be fair in more than name.



### Proposed tasks of the Regional Just Transition Support Centres:

- assistance in the development of projects from concept to final proposal,
- cooperation with representatives of local authorities, small and medium enterprises, large enterprises, the educational sector, social and environmental organisations,
- integration of diverse groups of just transition stakeholders on both the regional and national levels,
- initiating institutional partnerships for generating new value chains,
- ensuring the flow of information on just transition processes to its potential stakeholders,
- organising and conducting workshops and meetings with just transition stakeholders,
- providing technical and expert support,
- pre-assessing the feasibility of project proposals submitted to the JTF,
- educating and informing stakeholders about legislative changes affecting the transformation process and, using the expertise from their engagement with stakeholders, advocating for just transition-enabling legislative changes on a national level,
- generating project ideas,
- tracking information and monitoring changes in sectoral and territorial documents at regional, national and European levels
- collecting and providing information about sources of financing for just transition projects.

**The precise form of Regional Just Transition Centres should depend on the region and its circumstances.** In some regions, it may be feasible to set up a dedicated just transition support office<sup>1</sup>. In others, the function could be included in existing structures, such as local energy agencies or energy efficiency hubs.

It may be desirable in many regions to simply boost the capacity and scope of existing organisations, rather than set up new regional just transition support centres. This could help to avoid excessive bureaucracy and provide a single point of contact for stakeholders. Therefore an audit of existing organisations should be carried out in just transition regions to identify whether suitable bodies to take on the role of just transition support centres already exist. An example of where this could work well is the Coal Commission secretariat in Hungary.

In general, the body responsible for advising and educating stakeholders, as well as helping them with project proposals cannot at the same time manage and evaluate the programs. Managing authorities should cooperate with such centres but need to be separate entities. The Commission should cooperate closely with the different centres in each region which receive just transition funding and should directly engage with regions lacking such structures to support their establishment.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, as is planned by the Zasavje Regional Development Agency in Slovenia, to promote just transition and help with the development of projects.



## Why is it needed?

The just transition regions face huge challenges in rebuilding the foundations of their economies. To effectively leverage JT funds at the local level by submitting thoughtful and transformative projects, stakeholders need two things: expert support and technical assistance.

The activities of the Centres would strengthen the potential of the local community. They would combine excellent technical preparation with knowledge of local social and economic conditions at all levels - from entire regions, through counties and municipalities, to individual villages, towns and districts. It is crucial to involve as many local stakeholders as possible in the centres' activities. Their active presence would minimise the risk of wasting resources planned for just transition and improve the management of transition projects. Such a form of cooperation would allow the project authors and implementers to fully utilise the development potential of the region, create new jobs for the local community and provide a solid basis for creating a modern, zero-carbon economy based on renewable energy sources and low-carbon industries.

## Why is support needed from the EU-level?

Such Regional Just Transition Support Centres should be promoted on the EU level as an example of good practices. The support of the EU, e.g. during the Just Transition Platform as a suggested solution to the issues faced by Just transition regions, could lead to its wider application. The Support Centres would also require funding and support in building the expert capacity of its employees through training and information provided on the European level, as discussed in the next point.

As already covered above, the Commission should cooperate closely with the different centres in each region which receive just transition funding and should directly engage with regions lacking such structures to support their establishment. In this sense, the Commission should support regions to carry out audits to identify where suitable structures that could take on the role of regional just transition support centres already exist, and where more dedicated help to set up bodies is needed. In either case, support will be needed to expand their remit.

The EU can provide the level of co-financing, technical assistance and regulatory reform support to establish such centres. It may also be appropriate to make future just transition funding (under the next financial period) contingent on the establishment and operation of such centres in the regions.

**NEED: provide European-level support for just transition plans and project development in the form of dedicated personnel.**



## What would this entail?

The technical part of the Just Transition funds should specifically be used to cover staffing costs to ensure adequate personnel for the challenges faced. Their training should be made available to engage on just transition planning, project development and finding funding for projects. This would need to cover not just regional authorities, but also particularly municipalities, and include provision for staff who can support smaller stakeholders in developing good-quality projects.

This could be linked to the Regional Just Transition Support Centres discussed above, but in cases where such centres do not yet exist, capacity support for just transition personnel in municipalities (and EU training) should also be given.

## Why is it needed?

Many of the regions are not prepared for the preparation of good-quality projects on the level that is necessary for achieving the goals of the just transition process. Without building the capacity of all the stakeholders in the process, it will not extend beyond the central towns and areas that already have high capacity to become involved in the process.

## Why is support needed from the EU-level?

The EU can provide examples of best practices from across the EU's regions and can facilitate information sharing on plan and project development. Beyond this, in many member states, deep levels of centralisation mean that the structures may not be in place to provide the capacity needed at the level the just transition is implemented at to deliver it. Although in many member states EU support is also needed because a large priority of public infrastructure budgets are derived from EU funding and a parallel support is needed to deliver that investment, the EU should also encourage member states to put in place capacity support mechanisms where they can for the local level. It would be recommended that the EU provide training to such personnel, with regular workshops to develop their skills and knowledge of the funding mechanisms in place to build their capacity.

### Case study: Peripheral lignite coal regions

Many such regions have experienced depopulation and brain drain over the past decades. A lot of the planning and preparation of strategic projects are done in regional centres that are at some distance from the transitioning regions. An example of this would be the Eastern Wielkopolska just transition region, with the largest town Konin (population of 75 000 people) and smaller towns, villages and rural areas surrounding it. Its many problems include an ageing and decreasing population, relatively high unemployment (as compared to the rest of the voivodeship), high migration rates away from the region, uncertainty in economic terms





considering the transitioning away from its lignite-based single-industry economy. Most of the strategic planning is done in the capital city of the voivodeship in Poznań. However, many of the projects that need to be implemented in the region need to actually address the most pressing issues that can only be properly diagnosed and tackled in the regions themselves.

## **Need: dedicated European technical assistance to smaller actors to develop just transition projects and engage in planning processes.**

### **What would this entail?**

Support would be targeted specifically at small actors, such as municipalities, SMEs and civil society, to assist them in engaging in just transition processes: from plan development to project design and submission to the relevant authorising bodies. This could build on successful models of workshops targeting smaller actors in the regions to help with project development and their decarbonisation plans.

The information and assistance should be tailored to the information and capacity needs specific to smaller stakeholders. This means communicating clearly about the just transition process and how actors can contribute (and at which points), as well as how such input will be taken on board. Moreover, it also means translating the climate targets and policies into their implications on the local level, underlining the inevitability of the transition, but also highlighting opportunities - as well as what good projects could look like. The Commission should therefore investigate what is needed in particular regions and who the key small stakeholders are, or this information could be gathered by the regional one stop shops mentioned above in order to inform the approach in each region.

### **Case study: NGO-organised workshops in Poland (Eastern Wielkopolska and the Turów mining region)**

Through its work in the coal regions in Poland, including in the lignite coal mining and firing regions of Eastern Wielkopolska and Zgorzelec (Turów), the Polish Green Network (PGN) has established that there is a huge need for tailor-made targeted workshops for smaller stakeholders in the region. For example, frequently smaller municipalities have had low experience in applying for European funds and need support in identifying funds they can apply for and in writing successful project proposals.



In 2021 and 2022, PGN has provided such training sessions to interested parties, including general workshops on the just transition, and more detailed ones on European Funds, energy efficiency, energy-efficient renovations of buildings, re-employment strategies, circular economy in regards to communal waste, funds available for small and medium enterprises, mine site reclamation and restoration, writing project proposals, establishing cooperatives as an opportunity to provide employment. There were also workshops dedicated to farmers on water-related issues and water retention as a form of mitigating the consequences of climate change-related events, such as drought and heatwaves, and of the loss of water as a result of decades of open-pit mining in the areas. These workshops not only covered a broad range of topics but also targeted a wide range of stakeholders: from civil servants working at relevant municipalities through local entrepreneurs to farmers in the rural areas of the just transition regions.

While the above example is a good practice, illustrating the power of such targeted support and workshops to promote and facilitate effective engagement by smaller actors - civil society does not have the resources or scope to support such structures everywhere in a continuous, systematic and comprehensive way. It is vital that structured support is provided by national governments and/or the EU, so that communities in every just transition region can benefit.

Finally, this assistance could provide capacity support by linking smaller stakeholders together to increase the strategy and weight of their individual projects, or could even facilitate the formulation of joint projects/consortia according to each stakeholders potential. This could be part of the offer under the Regional Just Transition Support Centres mentioned above.

## Why is it needed?

Small stakeholders do not typically have the capacity or knowledge needed to engage actively and effectively in just transition processes, or to develop winning projects when calls for proposals are made.

EU policies have impact, but often appear disconnected from the precise challenges on the ground. There is therefore a need to translate climate policy targets from the EU to the regional (not only national) level.

Given the abstract nature of EU policy for many small stakeholders from their day to day operations, small stakeholders cannot be expected to be experts on EU policies and processes. They do not have the capacity to spend time getting up to speed without assistance, nor do they often have capacity to develop projects or seek out best practices. These are barriers when it comes to accessing EU-led funding, and a similar challenge may also be presented for accessing national funding. Another barrier is the lack of translations of a lot of the material into national languages.



Without targeted support, contextualised information<sup>2</sup> and assistance, small stakeholders will not be able to compete with better-resource stakeholders, such as large incumbent industries, to access just transition support or funds. In turn, this will undermine the just transition as it will present a barrier to economic diversification and to an economy-wide transformation.

## Why is support needed from the EU-level?

Support is needed from the EU-level in order to accompany EU just transition policies and funding frameworks which impact regions. The EU should work with regional actors, including authorities and consultancies to translate its language into regionally- and stakeholder-specific terms and contexts. Such solutions should be shown as good practices that help to make the transition more just by enabling smaller stakeholders to participate on a more equal footing.

As such assistance is essential to unlock the full potential and accessibility of the funds and financing available from the EU for just transition, it is a necessary measure to accompany EU just transition policies and support programmes.

### Case Study: dominance of 'consortia of big players'

In Hungary, the main challenge to be addressed is the dominance of "Consortia of big emitters/players". There will only be limited time to allocate, apply and use Just Transition funds through tenders. Based on the draft Territorial Just Transition Plans, the majority of the funds can be applied for by a few high-capacity stakeholders - the MVM Mátra Power Plant consortium, county-level Chambers of Commerce, and a research consortia of regional (now private foundation-run) universities.

Technical assistance is needed to build the capacity of local and sub-regional communities/municipalities, SMEs and workers' associations to ensure that they are meaningfully involved in these projects as consortia members from the beginning (planning) through to project implementation and evaluation and that they are key beneficiaries who are able to influence the whole project. The project calls and the whole project processes need to be monitored by the KEHOP Plusz Monitoring Committee (to include delegates from the above-mentioned regional stakeholders) to ensure that the JTF objectives and guidelines are properly met.

<sup>2</sup> This has been stressed by the recent analysis and report from The Institute for Sustainable Finance which found SMEs tend to be less informed about or interested in grant programmes than the other target groups and use different language to EU grant and just transition policy terms, identifying more with terms associated with efficiency. Available here: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f7709cd633d6220bbe2709/t/627274516ebde26577be8926/1651668105773/From+Sustainable+Investments+to+Just+Transformation+A+Case+Study+of+the+C3%9Ast%C3%AD+Region\\_ISFC.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f7709cd633d6220bbe2709/t/627274516ebde26577be8926/1651668105773/From+Sustainable+Investments+to+Just+Transformation+A+Case+Study+of+the+C3%9Ast%C3%AD+Region_ISFC.pdf), May, 2022.



The European Commission should also guide Member States to ensure a minimum participation rate of smaller local stakeholders in calls for proposals, consortia and project implementation. This will require a definition of smaller local stakeholders/local community to be developed.

## **ASK: standardise the presentation of technical assistance and group it in one place on websites in a simple and clear manner.**

### **What would this entail?**

There are a lot of forms of technical assistance available to the transitioning regions, but they have a variety of focuses and are provided by different institutions. It takes dedication and time to become acquainted with all of them. A guide providing an overview on a single webpage provided, for example, on the Just Transition Platform, and translated into the various languages of the just transition regions, would make it easier for people to become acquainted with the technical assistance that they can use for their various needs.

For each form of assistance, the Commission should provide an overview of the assistance, a link to any relevant websites, contact points, and a link to any open calls for proposals (or the page where calls for proposals are placed). For example:

TARGET provides support to EU coal, peat and oil shale regions with the identification and preparation of clean energy and energy efficiency projects. The facility was developed jointly by the European Commission, Directorate General for Energy and the European Investment Bank to support a just transition in EU coal, peat and oil shale regions. Applications or support can be made using the application form on this website:  
[https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/oil-gas-and-coal/eu-coal-regions/target-technical-assistance\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/oil-gas-and-coal/eu-coal-regions/target-technical-assistance_en)

Ideally, both EU and non-EU assistance would be included, such as:

- TARGET
- Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions (JASPERS)
- Technical Support Instrument (under DG REFORM)
- European Local Energy Assistance (ELENA)
- Secretariat Technical Assistance to Regions in Transition (START) under the Coal Regions in Transition Initiative
- InvestEU Advisory Hub
- TAIEX-REGIO PEER 2 PEER



An overview of each of the above examples is included in an annex.

## Why is it needed?

Such information is not available on the JTP website currently.

It was helpful that the technical assistance was presented at the November Just Transition Platform and this should be a regular, standing update during platform meetings. Online guides should be available in one place (one source/one stop shop for what is available), in order to reduce the burden on stakeholders. The most relevant location would probably be the Just Transition Platform website.

## Why is support needed from the EU-level?

The EU provides technical assistance and convenes the Just Transition Platform. It should be a function of the Platform, which aims to assist EU countries and regions to unlock the support available through the Just Transition Mechanism. In its role as a single access point for support and knowledge related to the just transition and as part of its offer of technical and advisory support to stakeholders involved in activities related to the Just Transition Mechanism, a single information point for technical assistance is needed

## **NEED: Common methodologies and standards to monitor and evaluate the Just Transition process.**

### What would this entail?

A plethora of information exists on the just transition, but there is no defined end point and so little means of evaluating progress to achieve it at local, regional or national level. The precise process and end points of just transition will vary by region and as such, it is challenging to propose a single methodology or set of criteria.

To help meet this need, high quality support and information on methodologies to monitor and evaluate the just transition could be promoted by the European Commission under the Just Transition Platform, potentially as guideline documents and toolkits. This information should be targeted and presented for different audiences, including within countries (as part of the coal regions in transition initiative or through ordinary technical assistance routes) to encourage adoption of processes and implementation of methodologies by member states, regional authorities or even regional just transition support centres - depending on how they are set up.



Eventually, high-level and high quality elements of the methodologies could be integrated into its analysis of the member state economies under the European Semester, enabling the Commission to make recommendations to facilitate delivery of just transition directly.

A good example of the features that should be monitored (and which could provide an inspiration for regionally-specific, or high-level EU-wide methodology) is provided by the Bankwatch Project Implementation Checklist<sup>3</sup>. This checklist can be used to monitor progress on just transition in any region, by evaluating the transition process according to three categories of action, climate neutrality and environment, social and economic development, and public participation.

### **Why is it needed?**

There is no defined end point for the just transition and no clear, predefined indicators for the delivery of a just transition at regional level. Without such indicators, it is challenging to share best practices or compare strategies and progress between regions, impeding learning between regions and the acceleration of the just transition.

### **Why is support needed from the EU-level?**

The Just Transition Platform provides a hub of information on the design and implementation of the just transition. As a single access point for support and knowledge related to the just transition, such a methodology/support to develop methodologies is needed.

Finally, in order to deliver the objectives of the EU Green Deal, the European Commission should evaluate progress on just transition within Member States and could include elements of the methodology as part of the European Semester process.

**NEED: dedicated support to finalise plans urgently before the end of 2022.**

---

<sup>3</sup> CEE Bankwatch, Just transition project implementation checklist, April 2022. Available at: <https://bankwatch.org/publication/just-transition-project-implementation-checklist>



## What would this entail?

Urgent and immediate support is needed to boost the capacity of municipalities and member state administrations, as well as accelerated approval processes for just transition plans - without compromising on the quality and exigence with which they are carried out.

Such support could include temporary personnel support to finalise plans in municipalities and member state administrations. It could also include a dedicated advisory service to identify blockages for rapid plan development and approval.

Temporary, EU-supported 'one stop shops' in the regions could provide information about the funding available at European and national level to support just transition (Just Transition Mechanism, but also other sources and their conditions). They would target information specifically to the regional audience and particularly to smaller stakeholders to make it relevant for them and avoid that accelerated just transition processes undermine their quality and inclusiveness.

## Why is it needed?

In light of the demands placed on many, especially central and eastern European regions and municipalities in light of the ongoing war in Ukraine, immediate support is required to ensure that the just transition plans can continue to be developed, approved and their implementation commenced. The war in Ukraine is also driving policy shifts in EU and national energy policy, which is creating confusion about the direction, as well as placing increased demands on the administrative capacity of policy makers.

Moreover, the consensus is that the transition to renewable energy must accelerate to respond to both the need for increased European energy security and the need for ambitious climate action. This means that support is needed to ensure that the accelerated process is also just.

Finally, support is needed to prevent regions from losing funds which are essential for the delivery of a just transition. Given the exceptional circumstances (the demands placed on governments and authorities due to the covid-19 pandemic and now also the response to the War in Ukraine), it is reasonable that support should be provided to help ensure the quality of the use and absorption of EU funds. If plans are not approved by the end of 2022, the allocation for 2021 is lost and pressure to absorb funds for 2022 in 2023 will be drastically increased, risking reduced quality of projects.

## Why is support needed from the EU-level?

The EU has a responsibility to assist member states to absorb EU funding and ensure that it is used for high quality plans and projects to protect the integrity of the EU budget. It also has a



responsibility to promote solidarity between the member states<sup>4</sup>. This is even more the case now, because some member states have suffered greater burdens from the Covid-19 and/or the fallout from the War in Ukraine.

The War in Ukraine is also leading to a boost in EU climate and energy targets, as well as the RePowerEU action plans - it is important that local stakeholders are supported to understand and respond to these new developments.

An acceleration of the transition is vital for energy security. Therefore it is crucial the EU also supports enhanced efforts to deliver a truly just transition, as to fail on this will risk the success of the transition - and the achievement of energy security - over the longer term.

---

<sup>4</sup> Article 3 Treaty of The European Union.





## ANNEX 1

### Technical Assistance to be included in a single online portal by the European Commission

According to information provided by the European Commission, the following assistance is available to support just transition - including some assistance available for smaller actors - and will be published online:

- 1) Combined in Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions (JASPERS), the policy expertise of the Commission and the project experience of the European Investment Bank are available for beneficiaries of the cohesion policy funds (incl. JTF), under JASPERS' main mandate from the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO). JASPERS' advisory function covers all aspects of project development, horizontal issues relevant to more than one project or country, and other project-related matters such as implementation support and capacity building.
- 2) The European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) is in charge of the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) that provides tailor-made technical expertise to EU Member States to design and implement reforms. The support is demand driven and does not require co-financing from Member States. The technical support is provided in a wide range of policy areas, including but not limited to climate action, digital transition and health.
- 3) European Local Energy Assistance (ELENA) is a joint initiative by the European Investment Bank and the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 programme. ELENA Provides technical assistance for energy efficiency and renewable energy investments targeting buildings and innovative urban transport.
- 4) Secretariat Technical Assistance to Regions in Transition (START) aims to leave a legacy of enhanced transition-related expertise, capabilities, and capacities in the coal regions that receive support. In the upcoming application process, this technical assistance will be provided to at least 12 applicants from EU coal, peat and oil shale regions. Target applicants would include: public authorities, especially local and regional governments and civil society organisations. The first call for applications is expected in the second half of 2022.
- 5) The InvestEU Advisory Hub is envisioned as the central entry point for project promoters and intermediaries seeking advisory support and technical assistance related to centrally managed EU investment funds. Managed by the European Commission and financed by the EU budget, the hub connects project promoters and intermediaries with advisory partners, who work directly together to help projects reach the financing stage. The InvestEU Advisory Hub complements the InvestEU Fund by supporting the identification, preparation and development of investment projects across the European Union. Together with the InvestEU Portal – the EU's online matchmaking tool, the aim is to strengthen Europe's investment and business environment.



- 6) TAIEX-REGIO PEER 2 PEER offers peer learning and knowledge exchange for administrations managing or implementing the cohesion policy funds through study visits, expert missions, multi-country workshops or webinars.

This Paper was issued by Europe Beyond Coal campaign in July, 2022.

Europe Beyond Coal is an alliance of civil society groups working to catalyse the closures of coal mines and power plants, to prevent the building of any new coal projects and hasten the just transition to clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency. Our groups are devoting their time, energy and resources to this independent campaign to make Europe coal free by 2030 or sooner.

<https://beyond-coal.eu/>

These organisations have contributed to the development of the paper:

Bankwatch CEE  
WWF European Policy Office  
Contact: Hello@beyond-coal.eu

#### Disclaimer

This publication and related materials are not intended to provide and do not constitute financial or investment advice. Europe Beyond Coal campaign or the organisations that have contributed to the development of this briefing make no representation regarding the advisability or suitability of investing in or divesting any particular company, investment fund or other vehicle or of using the services of any particular entity, pension provider or other service provider for the provision of investment services. A decision to invest in or to divest should not be made in reliance on any of the statements set forth in this publication. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information in this publication is correct, we cannot guarantee its accuracy and Europe Beyond Coal campaign or the organisations that have contributed to the development of this briefing shall not be liable for any claims or losses of any nature in connection with the information contained in this document, including (but not limited to) lost profits or punitive or consequential damages or claims in negligence.