

11 May 2020

Updates from the Platform for coal regions in transition

Dear friends and colleagues,

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a truly unprecedented situation, which affects us all. Our thoughts go out to anyone who has been impacted by it, either directly or indirectly.

We wanted to take the opportunity of this newsletter to inform you of the latest EU policy developments of relevance to you and the topic of coal regions in transition.

As you probably are experiencing yourself, the current situation is affecting our way of working. Since mid-March, most of us work from home, following rules and guidance adopted by public authorities. Under these circumstances, we were not able to meet for our April Platform meeting as planned. It appears that we will not be able to reconvene in our usual setting (in the short term at least), as social distancing rules and travel restriction remain in place.

However, we did not want to leave relevant topics unaddressed, or our stakeholders disconnected. With this in mind, we are designing a series of virtual sessions foreseen at the end of June/beginning of July, where we will take stock of latest developments and answer some of your questions. More information will follow shortly.

The European Commission is currently working on a post-COVID-19 economic recovery plan and a revised EU budget proposal. Both will be released during May.

The European Green Deal, Europe's clean growth strategy, will be at the very heart of the recovery plan, including its 'just transition' chapter. As mentioned by Kadri Simson, Commissioner for Energy, [now is not the time to delay our response to climate challenges and the energy transition](#): investing in clean energy and energy efficiency is the way forward to create jobs while reducing our emissions, especially when it comes to coal regions in transition. For the same reason, the Just Transition Fund, currently debated in the Parliament and the Council based on the proposal from the European Commission, will also feature highly in the revised EU budget proposal.

Work is also progressing on our initiative for coal regions in transition, thanks to the collaboration between the European Commission and the Secretariat of the Platform for coal regions in transition. Four toolkits, which were developed in close cooperation with many of you, will be available on our [website](#) by the end of May, and focus on the following topics:

- strategy development;
- governance;
- sustainable employment and welfare support;
- environmental rehabilitation and repurposing.

Our technical assistance programme (START) is also moving ahead, with support activities now starting in the Midlands (Ireland) and Asturias (Spain), and soon in the remaining five benefitting regions.

We are looking forward to meeting you in person again, once conditions allow. In the meantime, stay safe and healthy, take good care of yourselves and your

loved ones.

DG ENER, Coal Regions in Transition Team

Webinar series

During the coming weeks, we will host a series of webinars on key issues facing coal regions in transition.

Register to the webinars by clicking the links below:

- [Transition strategies & Governance of transitions](#) - 26 May, 14:00 - 15:30
- [Environmental rehabilitation and repurposing](#) - 3 June, 12:00 - 13:00
- [Sustainable employment and welfare support](#) - 18 June, 12:00 - 13:00

Adapting START to a new reality

The START (Secretariat Technical Assistance to Regions in Transition) team has undertaken in-depth scoping visits to five of the seven regions selected for technical assistance. Detailed work plans have been developed for four of these regions. In response to the changing environment caused by COVID-19, the START team is in liaison with regional and national authorities to understand how the technical assistance can be adapted to changing regional circumstances, and reshaping the support around remote engagement and online materials and tools.

[More](#)

Further resources

Initiatives

- [Helsinki Energy Challenge](#)
- [LIFE BRINE-MINING project](#)
- [Eskom's call for expression of interest for the repurposing of decommissioned coal-fired power plants](#)

Resources

- [Decarbonization pathways for oil and gas](#) - The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies
- [Best practices](#) - TRACER project
- [Guideline on available European funds and programmes for low carbon energy projects in coal intensive regions](#) - TRACER project

- [Best practice report on labour markets, social issues and tourism](#) - TRACER project
- [Best practice examples platform for the transition in coal-intensive regions](#) - TRACER project
- [Report on outcomes, lessons learnt and guideline for the transition in coal intensive regions](#) - TRACER project
- [Report on the environmental impacts and sustainable reclamation solutions in nine coal regions](#) - TRACER project

Platform for coal regions in transition. An initiative of the European Commission. secretariat@coalregions.eu

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