

Just Transition Forum 2023

Skopje and online

4 October 2023 – Physical participation via approved registration only, online participation open for all interested stakeholders. Albanian, English and Macedonian translation will be provided.

Fighting climate change is at the top of the political agenda of the Energy Community. Decarbonization ambitions materialised through the establishment of 2030 climate and energy targets for the Energy Community and its Contracting Parties. Focus is now put on the implementation of the Clean Energy Package, together with integrated national and climate plans.

Moreover, the newly adopted EU Regulation on carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM), and the necessary decision to be taken by the Contracting Parties on an EU aligned carbon pricing, will inevitably further anchor just transition in the policy discourse. This applies to the discussion on instruments needed to achieve the green transition while protecting the most vulnerable.

Against this background, the Forum will concentrate on tackling key aspects of just transition:

- A strong focus will be put on policy planning and implementation. Governments being responsible for effective energy and climate governance shall properly reflect just transition planning in their national transformation strategies and NECPs. This is particularly relevant to the Contracting Parties that are heavily dependent on coal. Coal regions urgently need a transition strategy that is holistic, sustainable and well-coordinated at all levels of governance.
- There are various ways that decarbonisation affects people's lives, and these will be discussed in the panels focusing on people and environment. Focus is put on labour market transition, effectively addressing entrenched inequalities, and improving air quality in the most polluted regions.
- Finally, a successful just energy transition requires adequate support, which on the one hand will help to effectively direct funds to sustainable investments, and on the other hand will ensure a fair and equitable distribution of resources. In this context, future revenues from carbon pricing should become an important part of the financial landscape.

The Just Transition Forum constitutes an invitation to a dialogue in all these areas with different stakeholders from the national and local governments, IFIs, representatives of trade unions NGOs, Academia.

Welcome coffee and registration 09:00 – 09:30

1. Welcome and introduction (09:30 – 10:00)

Welcome address

Dr Dirk Buschle, Deputy Director,
Energy Community Secretariat

Razmena Cekic-Durovic, State
Secretary, Ministry of Economy of
North Macedonia

Keynote speeches

Michela Matuella, Acting Director,
DG NEAR.D, European
Commission

Toni Konjanovski, Major,
Municipality of Bitola

2. High-level panel: POLICY AND GOVERNANCE (10:00 – 11:20)

How to ensure that energy transition is just – case of North Macedonia

Panel discussion

This panel will focus on how just transition is embedded in the NECPs, what role it plays in the EnC 2030 energy and climate targets and how it is linked to the national and local strategies and plans for coal regions in transition, while considering the coal phase-out perspective.

Panel will also tackle a question on how new climate policy instruments such as CBAM and carbon pricing may affect just transition strategies of the Contracting Parties.

CSOs views

Moderator:

Dr Dirk Buschle, Deputy Director, Energy Community Secretariat

Presentation:

Razmena Cekic-Durovic, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy of North Macedonia

Panellists:

Kaja Shukova, Minister of Environment of North Macedonia

Staša Košarac, Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Hercegovina

Viktorija Gryb, Member of the Parliament of Ukraine

Ryszard Pawlik, Parliamentary advisor to MEP Jerzy Buzek, former President to the EP

Astrit Istrefi, Executive Director, The Balkan Forum

11:20 – 11:50 Coffee break

3. Panel II: PEOPLE (11:50 – 13:00)

This panel discussion will focus on how to ensure a just labour market transition in coal regions in transition while removing current inequalities, such as for women and youth.

After a presentation on how to ensure a just and inclusive labour market transition, the panellists will provide solution-oriented policy recommendations from different geographical and thematic perspectives, showing that a well-planned transition can contribute to promoting human capital development, alleviating energy poverty and enhancing equality.

Moderator:

Marta Schulte-Fischedick, Energy Consultant, Energy Community Secretariat

Presentation:

Elise Vigier, Deputy Project Director, GIZ

Panellists:

Slobodan Trendafilov, President,
Federation of Trade Unions of
Macedonia

Nevena Smilevska, Just
Transition Coordinator for the
Western Balkans, Bankwatch

Dušica Seizovska Jovanovic,
Director of Legal and General
Affairs, AD ESM

Denis Piplaš, Deputy Secretary
General, Regional Youth
Cooperation Office

Merita Dema, Commissioner,
Energy and Water Services
Regulatory Commission of the
Republic of North Macedonia

13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH

4. Panel III: ENVIRONMENT (14:00-15:10)

This panel will focus on the environmental aspects of a just energy transition, as a well-designed transformation not only addresses climate change but also leads to cleaner air and soils and an overall healthier environment. It is an opportunity to revive the natural surroundings.

After the presentation on how to ensure better air quality panellists will discuss the key challenges and opportunities that a transition brings for the environment.

Moderator:

Peter Vajda, Expert, Energy
Community Secretariat

Presentation:

Jelena Moravski, Assistant Chief
of Environment Protection, City of
Novi Sad

Panellists:

Wolfhart Pohl, Lead Specialist,
World Bank

Elena Nikolovska, Climate
Programme Manager, Eco-vest

Elma Redžić, Expert Associate for
Development of Power
Generation, Elektroprivreda BiH

Aleksandar Dedinec, Senior
Research Associate, Macedonian
Academy of Sciences and Arts

Kostiantyn Krynytskyi, Head of
Energy Department, EcoAction

5. Panel IV: SUPPORT (15:15 – 16:25)

This panel will focus on the current support opportunities and further needs, including best practices and lessons learned for a Just Transition. Additional ways of catalysing financing for Just Transition will be explored, including through domestic means.

After the presentation on the Climate Investment Funds' support to Just Transition in North Macedonia panellists will discuss how a clear Just Transition strategy, also as an element of NECPs, can attract investment and what are the additional ways of attracting support.

Moderator:

Monika Figaj, Expert, Energy Community Secretariat

Presentation:

Anna Vasylyeva, EBRD

Panellists:

Holger Schroeder, Head of Unit, Western Balkans Regional Programmes, DG NEAR

Pablo Obrador, Head of Division Energy and Transport Southeast Europe and Turkey, KfW

Ivan Mrvaljević, Executive Officer, Elektroprivreda Crne Gore

Marta Babicz, Deputy Director, National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management of Poland

Viktor Berishaj, Western Balkans Energy and Climate Policy Coordinator, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe

6. Concluding Remarks (16:25 – 16:30)

Adam Cwetsch, Head of Green Deal Unit, Energy Community Secretariat

16:30 Cocktail reception