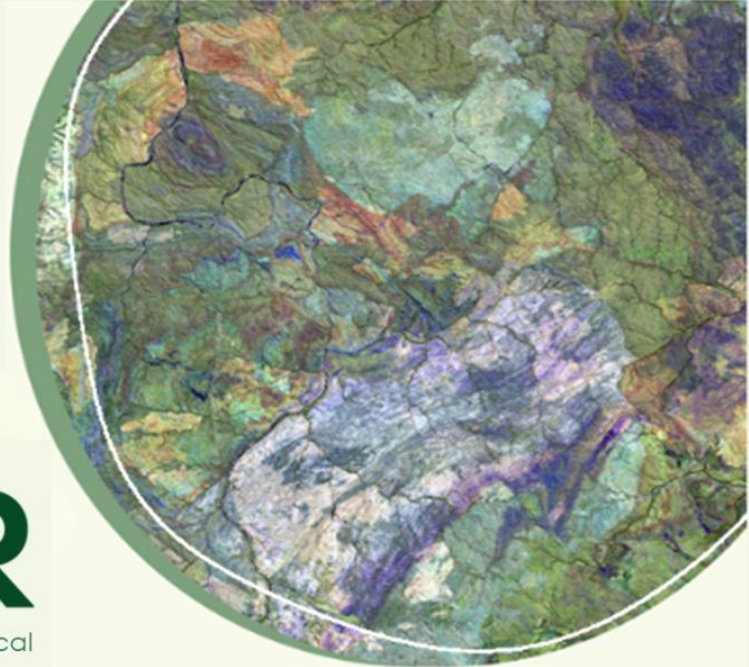




Bridging Organizations and marginalized communities for Local Sustainability Transitions in Europe



8th BOLSTER regional policy dialogue

Energy Transitions Across Multi-Scalar Governance Levels in Europe



21st of March 2025 – 15:30h-17:30h



Online



@BOLSTER_EU



bolster-horizon-europe



This project is funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement n° 101069586. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

8th BOLSTER's regional policy dialogue

Energy Transitions Across Multi-Scalar Governance Levels in Europe

On March 21st, the [BOLSTER](#) project (Bridging Organizations and marginalised communities for Local Sustainability Transitions in Europe) held its eight regional policy dialogue. This event was one of ten regional dialogues organised by ECAS within the project framework. The dialogues aim to facilitate cross-regional policy learning on just and green transition processes.

The event focused on how energy and climate transition policies develop across Europe, from EU Commission directives to local implementation, and examined their real-world impact.

The dialogue began with a presentation by **Dr. Michiel Stapper** from [Tilburg University \(The Netherlands\)](#), who introduced the concept of the just transition by tracing its evolution from labour movement origins to its current framing in socio-spatial and policy contexts. Dr. Michiel Stapper emphasised the need to reconcile social and environmental concerns through reskilling and inclusive community engagement to address structural inequalities. He also stressed the importance of policy grammars that integrate principles, territories, and instruments to achieve a just and inclusive transition.

Ana Maria Elian from [MKBT \(Romania\)](#) provided insights from Prahova, Romania, detailing how historical dependencies and economic challenges have created fractures in the local implementation of just transition policies. Ms. Elian's analysis revealed that the gap between formal policy ambitions and grassroots realities calls for more inclusive and responsive local governance mechanisms.

Nevelina Pachova from [RMIT Europe \(Spain\)](#) examined the divergent visions of environmental justice in León, Spain, demonstrating how long-term industrial decline and community marginalisation have shaped local expectations and participation in the transition. Ms. Pachova highlighted that fostering sustainable development requires integrating local heritage with initiatives that empower marginalised voices to drive social and economic renewal.

Drawing from the speakers' perspectives on just transition experiences in Spain and Romania, the dialogue transitioned into a panel discussion. The introductory tour de table with the panellists began with Prof. David Evers from [University of Amsterdam](#) and [UgoveRN \(The Netherlands\)](#) who examined multi-scalar governance in energy transitions, illustrating how national, regional, and local efforts can be aligned to support a coherent policy framework.

Afterwards, **Andre Legarza** ([University of Amsterdam](#) and [UGoveRN](#), The Netherlands) offered a socio-spatial analysis of the just transition, highlighting how deeply carbon-intensive industries are embedded in local life and cultural practices.

Finally, **Prof. Tobias Arnoldussen** ([Tilburg University](#) and [UGoveRN](#), The Netherlands) provided a legal perspective on the just transition, discussing how existing legal frameworks can be reconfigured to better support marginalised communities.

The panel discussion, guided by Slido questions, emphasised the importance of balancing high-level regulation with grassroots participation to achieve a truly sustainable and equitable transition for all communities.

- Transition policies must integrate social, environmental, and economic objectives to ensure that marginalised communities are not left behind.
- Multi-scalar governance—coordinating actions from European to local levels—is critical for a coherent and inclusive energy and climate transition.
- A socio-spatial approach should highlight the importance of understanding local historical, cultural, and economic contexts to tailor just transition strategies.
- Legal frameworks and policy grammars need to be reconfigured to incorporate diverse stakeholder inputs and address structural inequalities.
- Effective transitions require a balance between top-down funding and regulatory measures and bottom-up community engagement, ensuring both systemic change and local resilience.

In conclusion, a just and effective energy transition requires a holistic approach that puts together social, environmental, and economic priorities. Governance must operate across multiple levels of government, ensuring that policies are coherent and inclusive, while also being sensitive to local histories, cultures, and economic conditions. Finding the right balance between high-level regulation and grassroots participation is essential, fostering both systemic transformation and local resilience. Only through this approach can the transition be truly sustainable and equitable for all communities.



Bridging Organizations and marginalized communities for Local Sustainability Transitions in EuRope



This project is funded by the European Union under Grant Agreement n° 101069586. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.