

11 July 2024 Venue: [Velenje Cultural Centre/Dom culture](#), Titov trg 4, 3320 Velenje, Slovenia

08:30 - 9:00 **Registration and welcome coffee**

Welcome session

9:00 - 9:30

- Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice President of the European Commission for European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight
- Aleksander Jevšek, Minister of Cohesion and Regional Development, Slovenia
- Jože Novak, Minister Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia
- Peter Dermol, Mayor of Velenje, Slovenia
- Gregor Skender, Counsellor for Energy at the Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the EU, Master of Ceremony

Opening session: Five+ years of Coal Regions in Transition - perspectives of industrial and green transition in coal+ regions

Coal+ regions are well-situated to attract future-proof industries. The renewed focus of the EU on industrial policy gives these regions new impetus for the future. In this session, political leaders will discuss relevant developments and future perspectives in the context of policy change, highlighting successful examples of industrial transition.

9:30 - 11:00

- Moderator: Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice President of the European Commission for European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight
- Keynote speech: Jan Kříž, Director General at the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic
- Panellists
 - » Barbara Meyer, State Secretary of the Ministry for Regional Development of Saxony, Germany
 - » Petr Kulhánek, Governor of Karlovy Vary Region, Czech Republic
 - » Nieves Roqueñí Gutiérrez, Counsellor of Ecological Transition, Industry and Economic Development, Asturias, Spain
 - » Srečko Đurov, State Secretary of the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development, Slovenia
 - » Jan Kříž, Director General at the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic
- Closing speech: Viktor Horváth, Deputy State Secretary, Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU

Launch of the exhibition: Brownfields, industrial infrastructure and coal mines converted into business districts, energy sites and places of cultural significance

11:00 - 11:15

A special visual exhibition of best practices and examples of transition in coal+ regions, transitions of brownfields, industrial infrastructure and coal mines repurposed into business districts, energy sites and places of cultural significance.

- Miran Gajšek, State Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia
- Aleksandra Vasiljević, Deputy Mayor of the City of Velenje, Slovenia
- Carlo Della Libera, Secretariat of the Initiative for Coal Regions in Transition

11:15 - 11:45

Coffee break and exhibition

Combating energy poverty in coal+ regions through energy efficiency of buildings and citizen empowerment

This session will discuss energy-efficient buildings and energy communities, and their impacts in reducing energy poverty. It will consider the implementation of measures focused on energy efficiency in buildings, particularly where people in energy poverty dwell. It also showcases initiatives successfully supporting active consumption and features concrete examples from speakers about their experiences of tackling energy poverty.

11:45 - 13:15

- Moderator: Alicia Carrasco, olivoENERGY and Entra Agregación y Flexibilidad (Climate Pact Ambassador)
- Presenter: Paula Pinho, Director, DG ENER, European Commission
- Speakers:
 - » Sofia-Natalia Boemi, Cluster of Bioeconomy and Environment of Western Macedonia (CluBE)
 - » Sarunas Bruzge, Economist, European Investment Bank
 - » Zvonimir Anić, Senior Expert, Society for Sustainable Development Design (DOOR)
 - » James Roscoe, Citizen-Led Renovation support service
 - » Lidija Živčič, Focus Association for Sustainable Development
- Closing remarks: Matjaž Nemeč, Member of the European Parliament

13:15 - 15:00

Lunch break and exhibition

Site visits and opportunities for networking. Options:

15:00 - 18:00

Thermal Power Plant Šoštanj & District Heating System

Explore the operations of the thermal power plant and learn about the district heating system, which provides sustainable heating solutions to the region.

Coal Mining Underground Museum and Business Zone Stara vas and Old Power Plant

Enjoy an immersive experience of mining life and the history of the Velenje Coal Mine and witness the possibilities for transformation of industrial areas into vibrant business zones.

Revitalization of degraded area - Lake Velenje and VISTA – Park with a view

Experience the revitalization of Lake Velenje and learn about the efforts to transform a degraded area into a thriving tourist destination - with a view!

From 20:00

Cocktail and dinner

12 July 2024

8:30 - 9:00

Welcome coffee

9:00 - 10:30

Transition of district heating systems in coal+ regions

This session delves into the future of district heating in coal+ regions by discussing broader policy changes and their implications. It will cover innovative approaches to implementing renewable energy-based district heating systems, and share key insights from the District Heating Working Group.

- Moderator: Carsten Rothballer, Secretariat of the Initiative for Coal Regions in Transition
- Presenter: Paula Pinho, Director, DG ENER, European Commission
- Speakers
 - » András Takács, Senior Policy Advisor, Euroheat & Power
 - » Balász Hegyi, Environmental Expert, Eszterházy Károly Catholic University and Coal Commission Secretariat, North Hungary
 - » Dáša Jakubíková, City Manager, Municipality of Partizánske, Slovakia
 - » Gašper Škarja, Director of Utility Company of Velenje, Slovenia
 - » Stefan Retschitzegger, Scientific Researcher, AAE INTEC
 - » Jaroslav Straka, Programme Officer, DG REGIO, European Commission

10:30 - 11:00

Coffee break

11:00 - 12:30

Skills for Net-Zero Industries: the role of Just Transition Observatories

Coal+ regions have the potential to attract new emerging industries, but these new industries require skills development and education programmes to support workers and communities in the transition process. This session will examine the potential of providing such opportunities in coal+ regions and the role of Just Transition Observatories in tracking progress and providing guidance to ensure a fair and inclusive transition.

- Moderator: Robert Pollock, Senior Advisor, Secretariat of the Initiative for Coal Regions in Transition
- Keynote address: Barbara Kaufmann, Director, DG EMPL, European Commission
- Keynote speech: Milan Petit, SEER project lead, co-author of the report Labour market effects of the Green Deal Industrial Plan on Just Transition regions
- Panellists:
 - » Barbara Kaufmann, Director, DG EMPL, European Commission
 - » Milan Petit, SEER project lead, co-author of the report Labour market effects of the Green Deal Industrial Plan on Just Transition regions
 - » Ioannis Bakouros, Chairman of Regional Development and Cross Border Studies Department, University of Western Macedonia
 - » Ben Lennon, Advisor, ETUC
 - » Maria Belarmina Diaz Aguado, Director General of Energy and Mining, Regional Ministry of Ecological Transition, Industry and Economic Development, Government of Asturias, Spain

12:30 - 13:00

Closing session

- Paula Pinho, Director, DG ENER, European Commission
- Peter Dermol, Mayor of Velenje
- Gregor Skender, Counsellor for Energy at the Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the EU, Master of Ceremony