

Environment for non-environmental CSOs

Webinar on mainstreaming green transition

30 November - 01 December 2023.

IS THE EU GREEN DEAL FOR REAL?

Expert: Toni Vidan

Is the EU Green Deal for real?

- Basics, political context, and resources
- Case study: decarbonisation of energy sector
- Non-environmental aspect: "Just transition" and "Nobody left behind" concepts

Introduction

(from which perspective and experience I am speaking?)

- whole active life I am a „sustainable energy and climate campaigner”, in environmental CSO in Zagreb, Croatia (till 2020.),
- 1991.-1998. Climate Action Network (coordinator for CEE),
- 2013.-2020. member of EESC on behalf of national network of environmental CSOs in Croatia (Green Forum),
- EEB Bord member (as a candidate of *Environmental Ambassadors (EASD)*, Serbia).

Energy and Climate Program: „advocate sustainable energy by promoting energy efficiency and renewable”





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Campaign „SOS for Adriatic”: stop oil exploration in the Adriatic sea!



- workshops on
DYS solar
collectors'
production





SOLAR ACADEMY

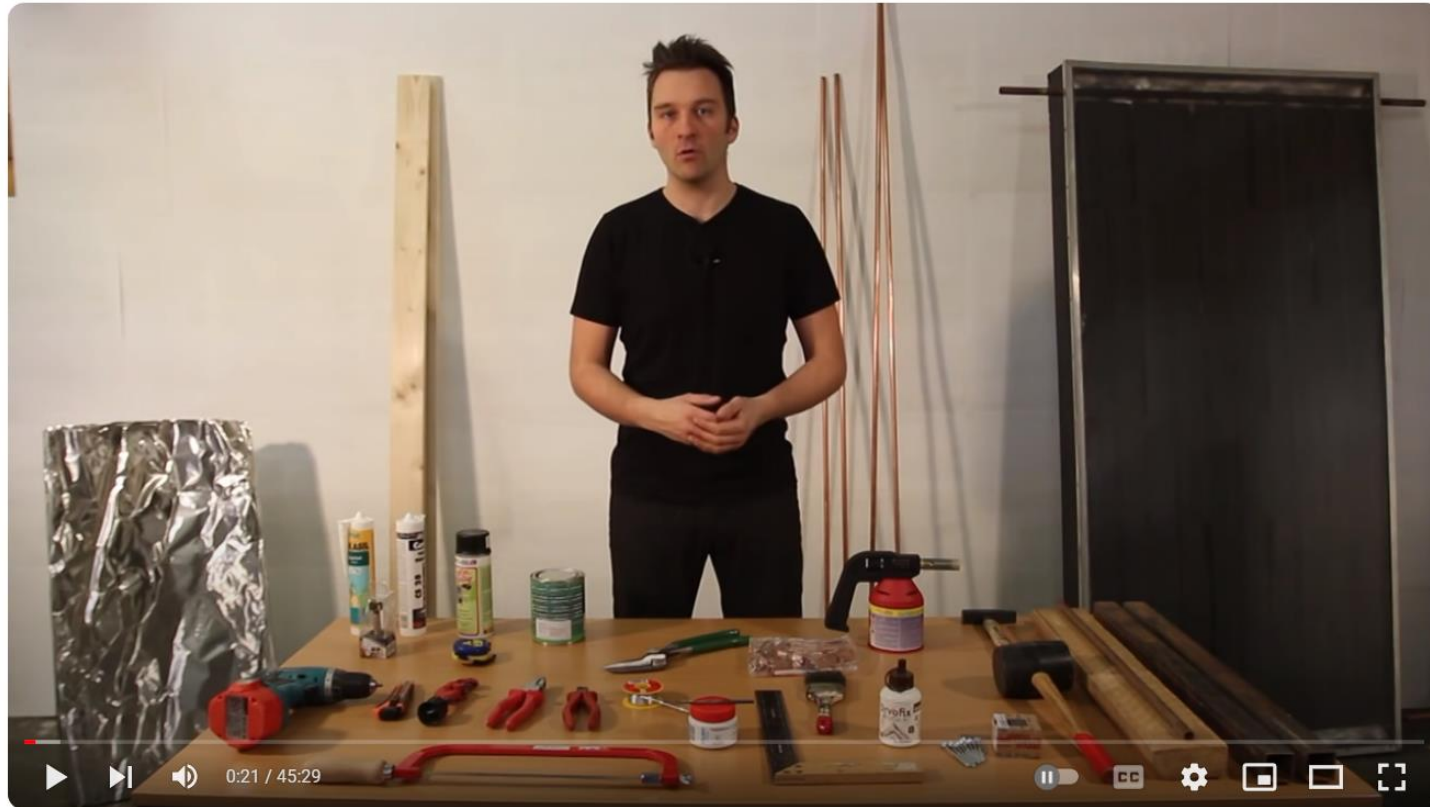
Island Šolta, Hrvatska





- former military barrack is transformed into in popular regional centre for education and inspiration in the field of sustainable development and environmental advocacy

- over 70 educational seminars and practical workshops were held with more than 1400 participants, primarily youth participants from a whole region of South East Europe



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„a bridge between EU and organised civil society”



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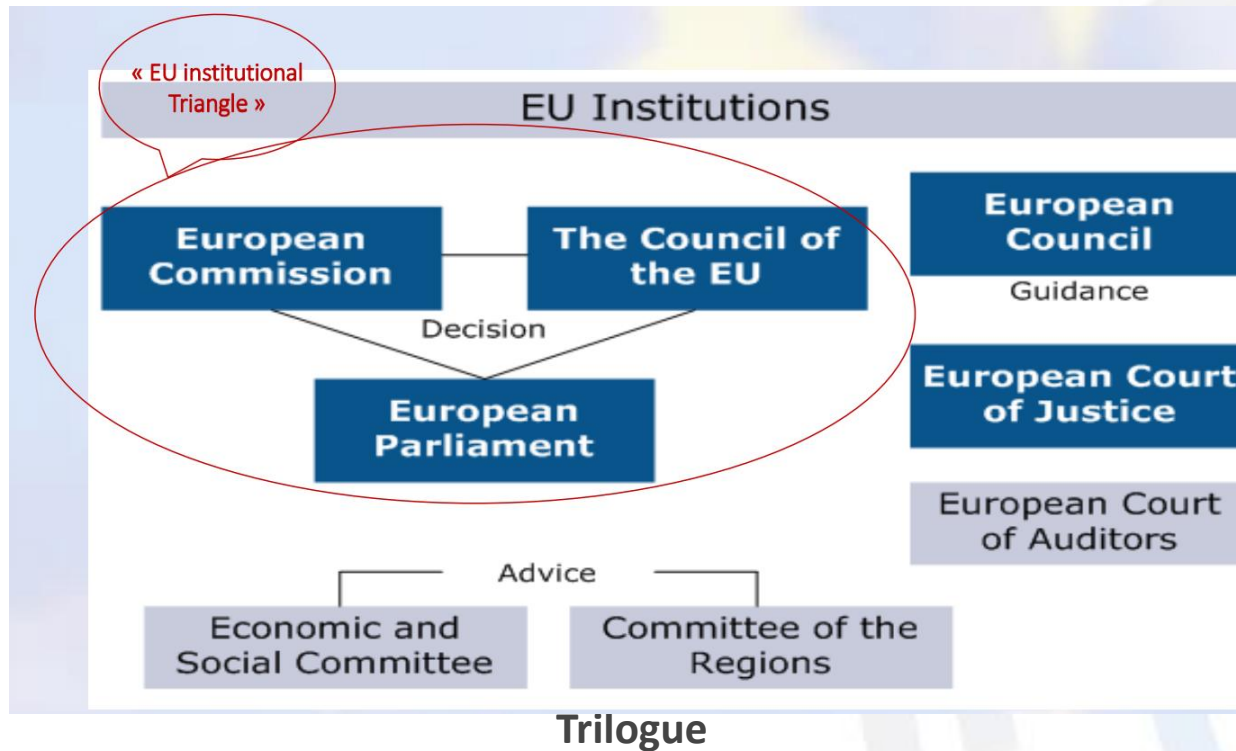
European Economic and Social Committee



European Economic and Social Committee



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In the context of the European Union's ordinary legislative procedure, a trilogue is an informal interinstitutional negotiation bringing together representatives of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. The aim of a trilogue is to reach a provisional agreement on a legislative proposal that is acceptable to both the Parliament and the Council, the co-legislators.

This provisional agreement must then be adopted by each of those institutions' formal procedures.

Different mandate of the EU for energy and climate policies!!!

- Energy policy is „a national prerogative”

The TFEU establishes the core objectives of EU energy policy (Art 194): ensuring the functioning of the energy market, ensuring security of energy supply, promoting energy efficiency and energy saving and the development of new and renewable forms of energy, and promoting the interconnection of energy networks. It also reaffirms that such EU measures shall not affect an EU country’s right to determine the conditions for exploiting its energy resources, its choice between different energy sources and the general structure of its energy supply.

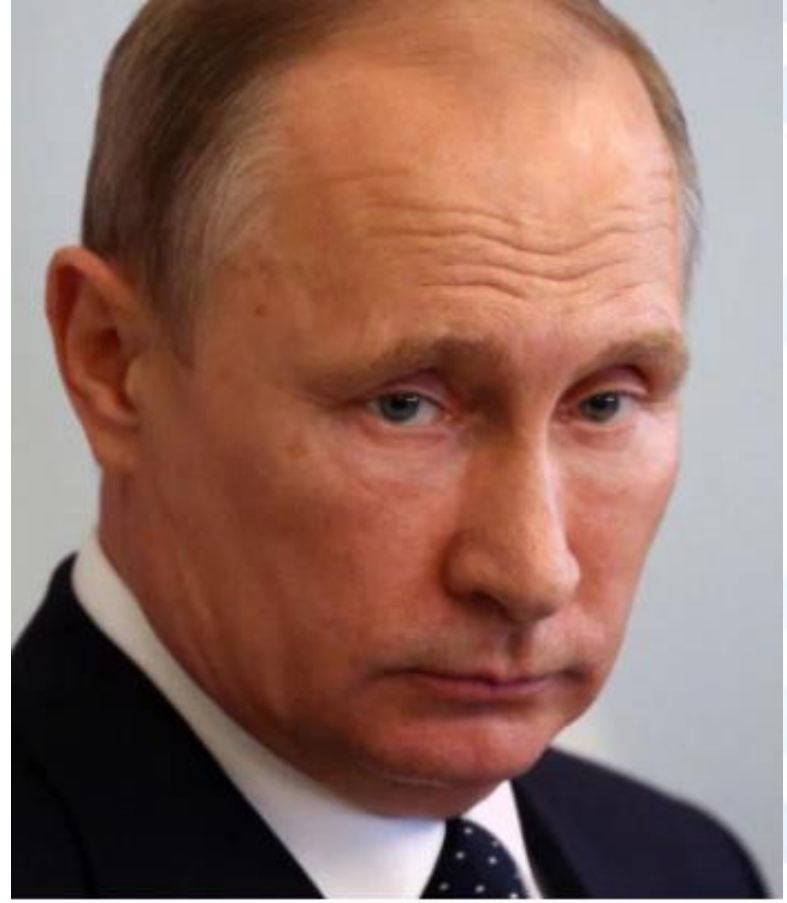
- Climate policy is „a common policy of the EU”

The TFEU emphasises the importance of integrating environmental protection into the definition and execution of EU policies and activities, with the ultimate goal of promoting sustainable development (Article 11). Specifically, the EU is required to safeguard and enhance environmental quality, encourage the responsible use of natural resources, and spearhead international initiatives to address regional and global environmental issues, especially climate change (Article 191). Additionally, while EU countries are responsible for financing and executing environmental policies, this does not diminish the role of the EU in taking appropriate measures (Article 192[4]).

the European Green Deal

- clear and relative ambitious climate targets for 2030 and 2050,
- introduction and adoption of a wave of legislation,
- hundreds of billions of euros in EU green funding have been mobilized.
- most of that despite the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine!!!
- green transition maintained as a part of the management of these crises.
- The investment plan to address the pandemic – NextGenerationEU – emphasized climate-relevant investments, while the REPowerEU plan to minimize reliance on energy imports from Russia has focused on rollout of green alternatives

The EGD: where it came from?





Looking back to understand today's risks and opportunities better

2014 and 2019 political and geopolitical contexts:

2014:

- Economic crisis, bailout packages, and austerity measures in Southern countries
- Open borders and intra EU migration
- Growing of Euroscepticism (UK, FR..)
- Ukraine crisis (Crimea)
- New *Spitzenkandidaten* process to strengthen the role of the European Parliament

2019:

- Refugee crisis
- Brexit
- Growing antagonism between the European Union and the US (Trump)
- Gilets Jaunes in FR
- Pressing issue of Climate Change (IPCC 1.5°C report)
- Fridays for the future, youth strikes

Youth spell out five demands to tackle climate breakdown

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By Various authors

May 21, 2019

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Popular article



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Policy brief

A new governance framework to safeguard the European Green Deal


This policy brief sets out policy proposals to enhance governance in order to safeguard EU decarbonisation.

Publishing date

06 September 2023

Authors

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EU Net-Zero Industry Act
European Hydrogen Bank

- *Nonetheless, difficulties lay ahead for the green transition in Europe. Meeting the EU's climate-change mitigation goals will require EU countries to take increasingly challenging decisions in the next few years.*
- ***Unfortunately, the actions they take are unlikely to be commensurate with the common climate-neutrality ambition, for two reasons:***
- *The first is a coordination failure. The main climate targets have been set at EU level while essential policies – particularly energy policies – remain largely national. The result is that collective action is likely to be insufficient.*
- *Second, reaching the climate targets requires profound changes to lifestyles and will have distributional consequences that could lead to a political backlash. This is already happening. Ahead of the 2024 European elections, more and more voices are speaking out in support of a slowing down of the decarbonisation process.*
- *Some recent national elections in EU countries, including Italy, Finland and Sweden, have seen a strengthening of voices critical of ambitious domestic climate policies, to the extent that the survival of the current consensus on climate neutrality within the European Council cannot be taken for granted.*

Gap Assessment of the European Green Deal

**REAL
DEAL**

RESHAPING CITIZENS'
DELIBERATION FOR THE
EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

PROJECT SUMMARY

REAL DEAL will stimulate a pan-European debate to reshape citizens' and stakeholders' active participation through deliberative processes around the European Green Deal (EGD). It brings together researchers and practitioners of deliberative democracy from a wide range of disciplines including environmental rights and the law of public participation, ethics and responsible innovation, gender studies and ecofeminism, psychology, geography, urban planning, and sustainability studies. It includes the EU's largest civil society networks advocating on the environment, climate, sustainable development, local democracy, and the European movement. It teams up with youth climate, social justice and women's organisations, SMEs, universities and research institutes, mobilising networks with thousands of CSOs, uniting millions of citizens and activating contacts to thousands of policymakers. In a large co-creation exercise, REAL DEAL will develop, test, and validate innovative tools and formats to propel deliberative democracy to the next level. It will test its innovations at citizens assemblies for the transition in at least 13 countries. We will scrutinise pan-European formats ranging from digital deliberation through our online platform www.realdeal.eu to in-person processes such as an Assembly for a Gender-Just Green Deal and a pan-European Youth Climate Assembly. REAL DEAL will co-create a comprehensive protocol for meaningful citizens' participation and deliberation to work towards the objectives of the EGD. It will validate recommendations on how to design such processes and how they can be applied by European institutions, Member States, and civil society alike. Gender equality will be embedded into the project's DNA. It pays specific attention to the leave-no-one-behind principle, fostering the engagement of disenfranchised groups that are disproportionately burdened by environmental damage. REAL DEAL will develop a new model of environmental citizenship across Europe.



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CONCLUSIONS

In the six areas of analysis, several key recommendations are highlighted by civil society to address the gaps identified in the EGD. **This conclusion briefly summarises some of the main recommendations in each category.**

To ensure complementarity with policy processes and frameworks and adequate monitoring and accountability of the EGD, we see a clear need for a long term and horizontal strategy to implement the SDGs, providing the overarching framework for the EGD policies. Participation by citizens and non-institutional actors must be encouraged, alongside the principle of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development.

In ensuring that the EGD is citizen led, it is important to prioritise meaningful participation, as well as inclusion and outreach towards marginalised and underrepresented groups. Further, strengthening the capacity of CSOs and citizens to participate in policy-making processes in a meaningful manner supports and guarantees co-learning, as well as the co-creation of the EU policies.

There is a huge need to address the unsustainable impacts of production and consumption beyond the EU's borders. An overarching recommendation is that the EU should reduce its material consumption by introducing a target for reduced material use of 70% across the whole of the EU by 2050. This will allow us to prosper within planetary boundaries, meet climate objectives and reduce energy demand, as well as improve the EU's strategic autonomy.

To ensure that the EGD is climate just, new economic models should be prioritised above extractive, accumulative and highly inefficient economic systems which do not meet human needs. Green jobs are the jobs of the future, and new approaches to the world of work will be needed, including improved social welfare, and working time reduction. Investment decisions must be coherent with environment and sustainability policies, twinned with more local investment in sustainable activities, as well as supporting the development of the cooperative and social and solidarity economy, including renewable energy communities.

Regarding the social dimension, the EGD must be redefined with a human rights-based approach at the forefront, making it intersectional and participatory, with a strengthening of its social and environmental interlinkages. A transdisciplinary and multi-sectoral approach, alongside a strong scientific evidence base for policies, can improve public trust in EU policymaking and foster broad support for the ongoing societal transition.

To ensure more equality and prevent discrimination within the EGD, there is a need to redefine these concepts to include multiple and intersecting categories of identity, as well as the historical, systemic, and institutional dimensions of oppression and discrimination. It is also crucial to engage pro-actively and systematically with underrepresented and marginalised groups who are often locked out of processes of decision-making

and lack the resources to participate. The European institutions must therefore actively reach out to such communities and transform their decision-making processes to make sure that EGD policies are more equitable and inclusive for all.

The gap analysis also included several recommendations for civil society organisations, which can be summarised into three broad categories.

Firstly, there is the issue of how to strengthen the existing capacity of civil society networks for various activities, such as providing support and assistance to citizens, and the capability of CSOs to meaningfully contribute to different processes. A healthy civil society contributes to the health of civic participation in a democratic society and a diversity of opinions. To do that successfully, independent CSOs need the support of governments to protect and defend civic space.

Secondly, there is the role of monitoring and reporting on the EGD and holding the European Union to account on its commitments. Often there are grand promises made, but rarely does Europe truly walk the talk on environmental social and sustainability commitments. Civil society organisations will be crucial actors in holding the EU to account, though they cannot do it alone.

Thirdly, there are recommendations to strengthen civil society participation in decision-making. Participation should be meaningful and conducted in a systemic and structural manner. Clear transparent communication and sufficient time to participate is paramount to ensuring that civil society participation goes beyond a box ticking exercise, moving instead towards an institutionalisation of deliberative and democratic participation in European politics.

In times of permacrisis, governments are responding reactively with quick, short-term fixes. Europe must boldly embark on policy-making that is guided by the long-term vision and objectives of the European Green Deal, facilitating a just transition that truly leaves no one behind. In the face of adversity, civil society organisations will continue to support and strengthen their involvement in environmental and social policymaking, and act together for a transformative Green Deal.

Table 1: Newly-established EU climate-related financial facilities

Fund	Amount (€ billions)	Theoretical climate action share	Timeline	Main focus	Beneficiaries
Recovery and Resilience Facility	338 in grants (723 in grants + loans)	37%	2021-2026	Implement reforms and investments to deliver the twin transition (digital and green)	All EU countries (but bias in favour of least-developed and most crisis-affected ones)
Innovation Fund	40 (from EU ETS)	100%	2020-2030	European industries	All EU industries subjected to the ETS
Modernisation Fund (1 and 2)	20 + 25.8 (from EU ETS)	100%	2021/2024-2030	Energy systems and energy efficiency	10 least-developed EU countries
Just Transition Fund	20.3	100%	2021-2027	To help alleviate the socioeconomic costs of the transition for the most negatively affected regions and people	All EU countries (but biased towards those most affected by closure of coal mines and sectoral transition)
Social Climate Fund	65	100%	2026-2032	To cushion citizens and companies from the consequences of extending the ETS system to the building and road transport sectors	All EU countries

Source: Bruegel based on European Commission. Note: the RRF is the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU, the EU's post-pandemic economic recovery plan; the Innovation Fund is the EU's main programme for the deployment of net-zero and innovative technologies in ETS sectors; the Modernisation Fund is designed to help EU countries in their transitions to climate neutrality by modernising their energy systems and improving energy efficiency, using ETS revenues; the Just Transition Fund is implemented under the overall framework of cohesion policy, which is the main EU policy to reduce regional disparities and to address structural changes in the EU; the Social Climate Fund will provide funding to member states to support investments in increased energy efficiency of buildings and granting improved access to zero- and low-emission mobility and transport.

BUT!

- a few weeks after the announcement of the European Green Deal Investment Plan: outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe!
- The next phase requires a focus on the housing and transport sectors and therefore implies higher costs for individuals and households than the first phase.
- In the coming years, EU member states will need to make difficult choices about how to bear and share the near- and medium-term costs of the transition.



EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

Q&A



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**Thank you for the
attention**

