Towards a Fair Green Transition

Harnessing Research & Innovation for social impact

Annual conference by V4 R&I Liaison Offices in Brussels

17 June 2025, 11:00 – 19:00, NCBR Office, Brussels, Belgium

The EU's green and fair transition aims for a climate-neutral, socially inclusive economy, ensuring no one is left behind. It links environmental goals with social equity through support for vulnerable groups, quality jobs, and inclusive growth.

At the same time, Europe faces major social changes from climate impacts, digitalization, demographic shifts, and economic uncertainty. These challenges demand resilient, cohesive, and fair societies.

In this context, research and innovation must deliver both breakthrough technologies and vital societal insights. R&I is key to navigating social change, strengthening resilience, and ensuring a just green transition.

The conference **"Towards a Fair Green Transition: Harnessing Research & Innovation for Social Impact"** is organised in synergy with the candidate European Partnership for Social Transformations and Resilience (STR) under Horizon Europe. Reflecting the STR's strategic orientations, the event places a strong emphasis on the role of SSH-driven R&I in fostering Europe's long-term societal resilience and EU competitiveness. Green transition shall not only be sustainable, but also inclusive and fair, bringing tangible benefits to all Europeans — enhancing quality of life, reducing inequalities, and empowering economic growth.

The event is jointly organized by **V4 R&I liaison offices based in Brussels:** Czech Liaison Office for Education and Research (**CZELO**), Slovak Liaison Office for Research and Development (**SLORD**), National Research, Development and Innovation Office of Hungary (**NRDIO**), Polish Science Contact Agency of the Polish Academy of Sciences (**PolSCA**) and in partnership with National Science Centre (NCN) of Poland, the coordinator of the candidate for Social Transformations and Resilience Partnership.

Through expert panels, scientific debate, and participatory dialogue, the conference aims to contribute to shaping fair, adaptive, and resilient societies capable of addressing the complex challenges of the 21st century—laying the groundwork for a future where policy, research, and societal needs are more closely aligned than ever before.

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NATIONAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION OFFICE HUNGARY

SLORD Slovak Liaison Office for Research and Development

PolSCA Polish Science Contact Agency

Agenda

10:30 -11:00 Registration and welcome coffee

11:00 -11:10 Welcome remarks

- **Tomasz Poprawka –** Director at the PolSCA PAS Office in Brussels
- **Waldemar Dubaniowski –** Director at the NCBR Office Brussels

11:10 -12:00

Session I: Framing the Green Future - just transition starts with SSH - moderated by Maria Andrzejewska UNEP/GRID Centre in Warsaw

- **Jeanne Lenders –** European Commission, DG Employment, Fair Green & Digital Transitions, Research unit (TBC)
- **Astrid Ladefoged –** European Commission, DG Research & Innovation, Head of Green Transitions Unit
- **Gabi Lombardo –** Director of the European Alliance for SSH - EASSH
- **Clément Evroux–** European Parliamentary Research Service – EPRS

12:00 -13:00

Session II: Understanding the Complexity of the Green Transition – empowering the change - moderated by Maria Andrzejewska UNEP/GRID Centre in Warsaw

- **Michał Kotnarowski –** Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland
- **Bohuslav Binka –** Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic
- **Juraj Buzalka –** Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia
- **Barbara Hegyi –** Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary

13:00 -14:15 Lunch

Agenda

14:15 -15:30

Session III: Aligning Strategies - Translating EU Policies into National Actions through HE Partnerships - moderated by Maria Śmietanka – National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) – National Contact Point, Poland

- **Opening speech by Barbara Świątkowska –** National Science Centre (NCN) & coordinator of candidate European Partnership on Social Transformations and Resilience.
- **Táňa Hálová Perglová –** Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TACR)
- **Borbála Schenk –** National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NRDIO), Hungary
- **Julia Rosend –** Ministry of Education and Research, Estonia
- **Jürgen Kroseberg –** Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), Germany

15:30 -16:30 Coffee break

16:30 -17:15

Session IV: Bridging Science, Policy, and Practice for a Fair Green Transition - participatory exercise - session is hosted by Joint Research Centre

- **Opening remarks – Elias Kock –** Science for Democracy and Evidence-informed Policymaking unit at the JRC-Brussels,
- **Session moderation – Ventseslav Kozarev –** Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy unit at the JRC-Ispra, Italy

17:15 -19:00 Networking reception

11:10 – 12:00

Session I: Framing the Green Future - just transition starts with SSH

This opening panel will highlight the vital role of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) in research and innovation, using the green transition to show how insights into justice, behaviour, and governance are key to fair and effective climate policies.

Speakers will examine how R&I frameworks can better integrate social dimensions, strengthen resilience, and avoid deepening inequalities. The session will also preview the proposed STR Partnership under Horizon Europe, aimed at boosting societal preparedness.

By setting the day's intellectual tone, the panel will emphasize SSH's value in shaping just and inclusive transition pathways, fostering dialogue across sectors.

Moderator

Maria Andrzejewska – Director General of UNEP/GRID Centre in Warsaw.

Speakers

Jeanne Lenders – European Commission, DG Employment, Fair Green & Digital Transitions, Research unit (TBC)

Astrid Ladefoged – European Commission, DG Research & Innovation, Head of Green Transitions Unit

Gabi Lombardo – Director of the European Alliance for SSH - EASSH

Clément Evroux– European Parliamentary Research Service - EPRS

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12:00 – 13:00
Session II: Understanding the Complexity of the Green Transition – empowering the change.

The second session of the conference will place research and innovation at the forefront of addressing today's evolving societal landscape.

Featuring leading researchers from V4 countries, this session will explore the multifaceted nature of the green transition, examining how it intersects with deep structural social changes. Key issues such as social equity and inclusion of vulnerable groups, social aspects of the green transition for different generations and socioeconomic groups, education for the inclusive green and digital transformation, and citizen engagement will be unpacked, offering critical perspectives on both the challenges and opportunities of this transformation.

Moderator

Maria Andrzejewska – Director General of UNEP/GRID Centre in Warsaw.

Speakers

Michał Kotnarowski – Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland

Bohuslav Binka – Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic

Juraj Buzalka – Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

Barbara Hegyi – Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary

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14:15 – 15:30

Session III: Aligning Strategies - Translating EU Policies into National Actions through HE Partnerships

The third session of the conference will explore how national and regional policies can be effectively aligned with European strategies to support a fair, inclusive, and sustainable green transition. By showcasing successful policy-shaping experiences, the session will highlight the critical components of not only designing but also implementing effective policy frameworks. A particular emphasis will be placed on the role of European Partnerships—strategic Horizon Europe initiatives that bring together the European Commission, national governments, public institutions, NGOs, and the private sector to address major challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and digital transformation

The panel will serve as a forum for sharing best practices and lessons learned on how to effectively translate EU-level objectives into national and regional action plans. It will examine how European Partnerships can act as strategic tools and incentives to align national priorities with EU agendas.

Moderator

Maria Śmietanka – National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) – National Contact Point, Poland

Speakers

Barbara Świątkowska – National Science Centre (NCN) & coordinator of candidate European Partnership on Social Transformations and Resilience.

Borbála Schenk – National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NRDIO), Hungary

Táňa Hálová Perglová – Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TACR)

Julia Rosend – Ministry of Education and Research, Estonia

Jürgen Kroseberg – Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), Germany

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16:00 – 17:15
Session IV: Bridging Science, Policy, and Practice for a Fair Green Transition - participatory exercise - session hosted by Joint Research Centre:

The final session will take the form of a participatory dialogue, moderated by an expert from the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) well-versed in connecting the worlds of research and policymaking. This closing session is designed to facilitate active exchange between participants, drawing on their insights and experiences to explore actionable pathways toward societal transformation & resilience in the process of a just green transition.

The session will begin with a presentation on key elements of science for policy highlighting how evidence-based research can more effectively inform and shape social and economic policy frameworks at all levels. Building on this foundation, the moderator will open the floor to participants, encouraging discussion on practical experiences related to green transition policies, and efforts to align regional and national strategies with broader European priorities. The session aims to conclude the conference on a collaborative note, capturing reflections and ideas that can help guide future initiatives at the intersection of research, innovation, and policy.

Moderator

Ventseslav Kozarev – Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy unit at the JRC-Ispra, Italy

Speakers

Elias Kock – Science for Democracy and Evidence-informed Policymaking unit at the JRC-Brussels,

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Moderators

Maria Andrzejewska Director, DG Employment, Fair Green & Digital Transitions, Research Unit
UNEP and EU expert on environmental analysis, co-author of the GEO-6 report, member of the Leadership for Sustainable Future Committee, initiator of the SDG Partnership 'Together for the Environment', and Vice-President of the National Foundation for Environmental Protection.

Maria Śmietanka Deputy Director, NCP/NCBR, Poland
Coordinates Poland's participation in EU R&I programmes. Facilitates international collaboration and supports national research institutions through policy guidance, contributing to scientific excellence and technological development.

Ventseslav Kozarev, Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy, JRC, Italy
Policy Analyst at the EC's Joint Research Centre working on guidance for the systematic evaluation of participatory processes. He leads JRC's contributions to assessing citizen engagement provisions in Cities Mission Climate Neutrality Action Plans.

Speakers

Jeanne Lenders – European Commission, DG Employment, Fair Green & Digital Transitions, Research unit (TBC)

Astrid Ladefoged Head of Unit, DG R&I, EC
With 25 years in EU policy, she brings expertise in environmental economics and agricultural science. Has worked at national ministries, European think tanks, and in various EC departments and a cabinet, focusing on green transitions and strategic innovation policies.

Gabi Lombardo – Director, European Alliance for SSH
Science policy leader advocating for evidence-based policymaking and researcher inclusion in funding. Has served at LSE, ERC, Science Europe; evaluator for EU, World Bank, and COST; expert in strategic foresight and SSH advocacy across Europe.

Clément Evroux – European Parliamentary Research Service - EPRS

Michał Kotnarowski – Assoc. Prof. IFiS PAN
Sociologist and political scientist. Studies electoral behaviour, political culture, and social research methodology. Coordinates the European Social Survey in Poland and contributes to HE projects Infra4NextGen and SoGreen on research infrastructures.

Bohuslav Binka – Assoc. Prof., Masaryk University
Environmental ethicist and gestalt therapist researching sustainability education, climate ethics, and ecological psychology. Leads the HARP project on emotional responses to climate change and student empowerment through education.

Juraj Buzalka – Professor, Comenius University
Anthropologist researching social movements, memory politics, religion, and wine culture. Participates in the Horizon Europe project SERIGO, promoting social economy, inclusion, and resilience in rural European communities.

Barbara Hegyi – ELTE Faculty of Informatics & EIT Digital Master School Budapest
Coordinates the Innovation and Entrepreneurship minor at the EIT Digital Master School at ELTE, designing courses on the social and environmental responsibility. Inciter of interdisciplinary and inter-university activities, including the creation of REDINEST impact labs initiative.

Barbara Świątkowska – Coordinator, NCN Poland
Coordinates the Social Transformations Partnership and has led the Polish Basic Research Programme. Her work spans research policies, interdisciplinary initiatives, and evidence-based decision-making, with a focus on EEA and Norway Grants cooperation.

Borbala Schenk – Head of Department for International Cooperation at the National Research Development and Innovation Office in Hungary; leads the team responsible for Hungary's primary R&I funding agency's international portfolio, including 30 European co-fund schemes; coordinates the Hungarian HE NCP Network.

Táňa Hálová Perglová – Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TACR)

Borbála Schenk – National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NRDIO), Hungary
Research Development and Innovation Office in Hungary; leads the team responsible for Hungary's primary R&I funding agency's international portfolio, including 30 European co-fund schemes; coordinates the Hungarian HE NCP Network.

Julia Rosend – Ministry of Education and Research, Estonia
Leads Estonia's international RDI coordination and Smart Specialisation. Works closely with EU bodies to shape ERA and FP strategies, aligning national and EU policies to maximize coherence and impact in research and innovation funding frameworks.

Jürgen Kroseberg – BMFTR, Germany
Expert in EU research and innovation policy. German delegate to the ERC and Strategic Programme Committees. Represents Germany in the Partnership Knowledge Hub and EIT Member Representatives Group, shaping EU research collaboration frameworks.

Elias Kock – Science for Democracy and Evidence-informed Policymaking unit at the JRC-Brussels