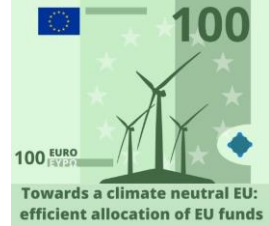




European Climate Initiative EUKI Academy

EUKI Academy web seminar on
**Towards a climate-neutral EU:
efficient allocation of EU funds**

27.03.2023



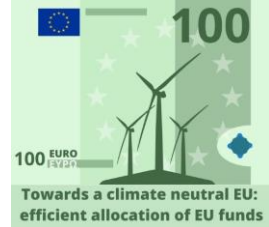
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Welcome and housekeeping



Please mute your mic during presentations



Post comments and questions in the chat



Event will be recorded

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Plan for today

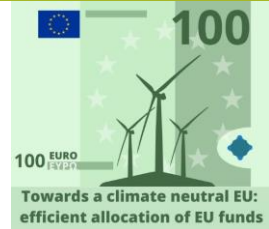
1 - Short introduction of the Project

2 - Project partners & Reaction from European Parliament (15.10 - 15.30)

- **Katalin Tarr**, Policy Officer, Clean Air Action Group (Hungary)
- **Yasen Georgiev**, Executive Director, Economic Policy Institute (Bulgaria)
- **Jonas Sonnenschein**, Project Leader, Umanotera (Slovenia)
- **Ewa Świerkula**, Institute for Sustainable Development (Poland)
- **Zita Herman**, Advisor on Budget, The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament

3 - Panel Discussion (15:30 - 15:45)

4 - Q & A & Discussion (15.45 - 16:00)

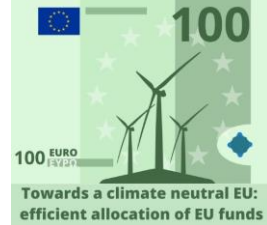


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Why are eco NGOs interested in EU funds?



- CEEweb for Biodiversity (incl. BG, HU, LV, PL, RO, SK)
- European Environmental Bureau
- Clean Air Action Group, HU network
- Centre for Transport and Energy (CDE), CZ
- Focus Eco Center, RO
- Green Liberty, LV
- The Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD), PL
- The Economic Policy Institute (EPI), BG
- Združenie Slatinka (Slatinka), SK
- Umanotera, SI

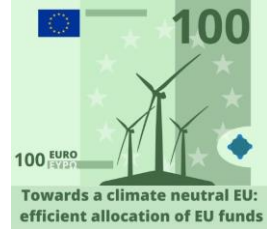


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Why are eco NGOs interested in EU funds?



1. Spending **has increased massively** (RRF, REPowerEU)
 - Funding comes with responsibility
 - Without accountability, risk of corruption
2. Many **projects undermine climate objectives**
 - Large physical infrastructure with insufficient climate tracking
3. Good **planning capacities** important
 - Local, regional & national

Lessons learnt

1. Position paper on governance

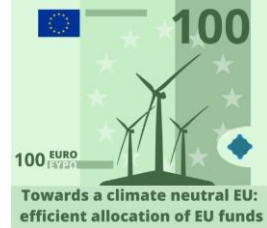
"Current system of EU funding at national governments must change"
download on www.ceeweb.org/eufunds/

2. Best Practice Database

Mainly the good, but also some problematic examples

3. (Work in progress): 5 principles on best practices

Involve local communities; increase local planning;
energy savings first... (tbc)



The ups and downs of EU funded water retention projects in Hungary



Image source: Greenfo.hu; Báthory Róbert

Ecosystem-based
water management
practices
vs.
oversized rainwater
reservoirs



Báthory Róbert (RFE/RL)



Katalin Tarr, Clean Air Action Group



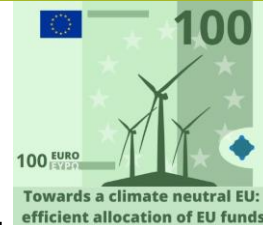
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Recommendations

- **Small-scale, nature based projects** vs. irreversible hard-engineering solutions
- **Planning, monitoring, control** → efficiency
- **Legal and financial responsibility** of implementer, permitter
- **Public participation** (strong civil society, independent media, publicly available information)
- **Independent authorities** with sufficient capacity



Katalin Tarr, Clean Air Action Group



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Win-win for climate & energy poor households in Slovenia

ZERO 500: subsidizing measures to reduce energy use in low-income households

Recommendations:

- Focus funding on RES-E and EE measures that do not pay for themselves
- Seek double-dividend climate projects that contribute to social justice



Jonas Sonnenschein, Umanotera **UMANOTERA**

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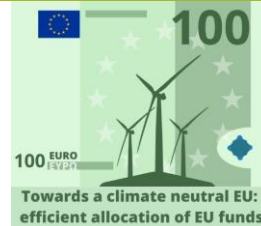
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Mistake to avoid: Combined road and cycling infrastructure

Cycling paths are often not physically separated from roads, so that investments into cycling infrastructure can be mixed up with investments into roads.

Recommendations:

- focus investments on truly sustainable modes of transport
- stricter regulation and monitoring of labelling and categorization of cycling infrastructure projects



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Jonas Sonnenschein, Umanotera **UMANOTERA**

Speed up the green transition with RRF milestones



Example 1: Green budgeting methodology

By Q4 2023 a green budgeting method must be implemented in order to receive RRF funding for low-carbon, circular economy investments.

Example 2: Act on the Promotion of the Use of RES

Easing the process for RES-E on uncontroversial surfaces might have happened anyways, but reform speeded up due to “pressure” to quickly absorb RRF funds.

Recommendation: EC and MS agree on ambitious reform milestones with strong ownership of the MS



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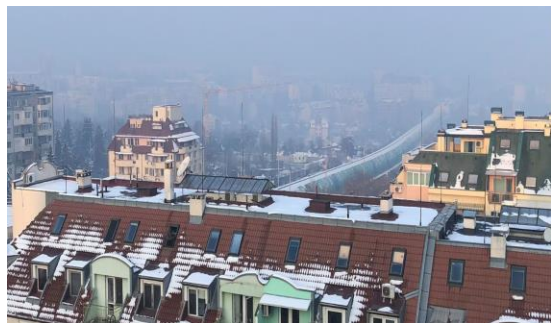


Jonas Sonnenschein, Umanotera **UMANOTERA**

The ups and downs of EU funded projects in Bulgaria



Source: <https://vazrajidane-wellness.com/>



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Yasen Georgiev, Economic Policy Institute

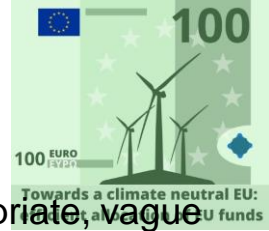


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Main takeaways and recommendations

NB: situation with EU funded-projects is not a black-and-white issue

- **Improve indicators measuring effects of EU funding** - currently they are often inappropriate, vague or practically non-existent, e.g. in regards to emissions reduction targets, energy efficiency improvements, etc.
- **Improve the efficiency of use of EU money** - some projects include construction of facilities with questionable usage.
- **Improve outreach and communication with local stakeholders** - some projects do not properly communicate the added value of climate-related activities.
- **Improve goals' setting** - in order to get approved, some projects set sometimes realistic goals, e.g. introducing congestion charge model and low emission urban zones
- **Don't violate against domestic law** → leading to bad perception for EU/EU funded projects, e.g. a road section within urban mobility project was put into operation without the necessary construction completion certificate.



Yasen Georgiev, Economic Policy Institute



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The ups and downs of EU funded city projects in Poland



Climate Change
Adaptation Plans
for cities



**Ewa Świerkula, Institute for Sustainable
Development Foundation**



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The ups and downs of EU funded city projects in Poland

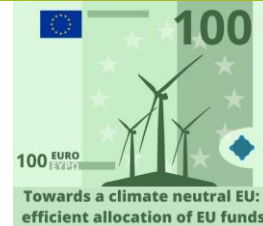


Photo. Starostwo Leżajsk

Revitalisation
of Market
Square
in Leżajsk



Photo. Patryk Ogorzałek / Agencja Wyborcza.pl

**Ewa Świerkula, Institute for Sustainable
Development Foundation**



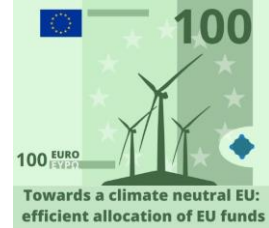
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Recommendations

- **Improve the efficiency of use of EU money**
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation – do not wait for the new financial perspective
- Involvement of national EC representatives
- Evaluation bodies
- Criteria (SD, DNSH)
- Cooperation with stakeholders



Ewa Świerkula, Institute for Sustainable Development Foundation



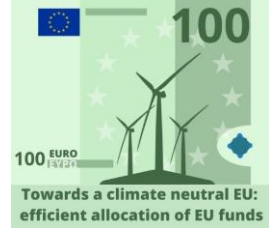
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Contact

European Climate Initiative (EUKI)
Potsdamer Platz 10
10785 Berlin
Contact: academy@euki.de

EUKI website: www.euki.de/en



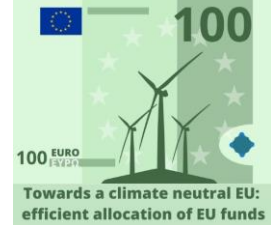
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