

PRESS RELEASE

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Coal regions from across Europe present policy solutions and project ideas to drive a clean and just transition

The TRACER project closed with an Investors Workshop and a Final Policy Conference on 20 & 21 September 2022, where nine coal regions shared their ideas to get out of coal.

BRUSSELS, 21 September 2022. The Horizon 2020 project [TRACER](#) gathered 15 partners who have



worked together for 3 and a half years to support 9 European coal regions to design Research and Innovation (R&I) strategies for a climate-friendly and economic or socially just transition away from coal. The project closed with two events in Brussels with over 50 participants attending each, including partners and stakeholders from all 9 coal regions, local and regional SMEs, researchers, civil society, European Commission officials and many others.

An **Investors Workshop** on the 20th of September showcased prospective ideas for regeneration in each of the 9 TRACER coal regions. The projects were appraised by a jury of three finance and clean technology experts: Michal Sobczyk from [EIT InnoEnergy](#), Suzana Carp from [Cleantech for Europe](#) and Professor Jan Bekkering from the [Hanze University of Applied Sciences](#). The jury awarded:

- 1st prize overall to: Andy Billcliff of Menter Mon, for a project to develop tidal energy and hydrogen in Wales, UK
- 2nd prize overall to: Charalampos Malamatenios from the Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES) for a project on developing a Biomass Logistic and Trade Centre in Western Macedonia, Greece
- Prize for positive impact on the community to:
 - Igor Volchyn from the Thermal Energy Technology Institute (CETI) for Post-coal development project in the municipality of Myrnograd
 - Marketa Hendrychova from the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) for the revitalization of a mining area in Northwest Bohemia, Czechia



The Investors workshop closed with a panel discussion on EU funding instruments with the Secretariat of the Coal Regions in Transition (CRIT) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Climate. The attendants of the workshop were interested to learn on the extension of eligibility for Modernisation Fund's financing to Portugal and Greece, and Slovenia if the thresholds for determining eligibility proposed by the Council are accepted by the European Parliament. The presentations performed during the Investors Workshop can be accessed [online](#).



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The **TRACER Final Conference** on the 21st of September introduced the main results of the project in nine coal regions and opened the discussion with policy makers on the barriers, challenges and opportunities. The panel discussion on post-mining landscapes highlighted the importance of changing mindset about post mining lands and looking for new opportunities in the topics of biodiversity, ecosystem services and tourism.



The panel discussion on social challenges and reskilling provided an overview on the [Net Zero Wales - Skills for the New Decarbonisation Plan](#) (and highlighted reskilling needs and opportunities in coal regions in order to make the transition just. Finally, the importance of the cultural and industrial footprint of former coal intensive regions in the transition process was emphasized. Preserving cultural heritage can bring important benefits in terms of jobs creation and income at the community level. The presentations performed during the TRACER Final Conference can be accessed [online](#).



As the project is moving towards its successful closure, all the reports on different topics elaborated under the frame of the various work packages of the project can be found in the “**Publications**” section of [TRACER](#) website.

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