

More and better designed national public support for energy technology Research and Innovation

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## European conference on Risk Access Finance in Clean Energy: Report on the Access to Risk Finance Conference content

D4.3 – Report on the Access to Risk Finance Conference content

WP 4 - Access to Risk Finance Conference

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[www.smartspend.eu](http://www.smartspend.eu)



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## Technical references

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## The SMARTSPEND project

SMARTSPEND is a 3-year, EU-funded project running until 30 November 2021, that aims to find new ways to coordinate and increase investments in clean energy Research & Development. The SMARTSPEND project is supporting the execution of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) of the European Commission.

The project has 3 overall objectives:

- Increase private-sector spending: SMARTSPEND will organise a major conference to help innovators in clean energy access risk finance from public and private sources. Innovators need money and connections to scale up. To prepare the conference, SMARTSPEND will report the needs and sources.
- Coordinating research with the European Commission and civil servants: Many energy technologies are trying to answer similar R&D questions. There may be ways to sequence research in different sectors to increase its impact. SMARTSPEND will report on the synergies in different technologies' R&D plans, and on the ways that sectors should organise themselves to access EU funding efficiently.
- Sending a message to national governments: National governments' funding as well as their contributions to the European Union's R&D budget is crucial for the development of clean energy technology.

## The Access to Risk Finance for Clean Technologies Conference

This conference will showcase the EU's funding and financing offer for energy demonstration projects, and give space to some private providers of finance to present their involvement in new energy technology.

Technology developers will deepen their understanding of these sources of capital. They will also have the possibility to connect with representatives of public and private finance organisations.

Financial providers, both public or private, will gain awareness of the energy community's needs and learn about projects that may be of interest as investment opportunities.

The conference will gather together 3 different stakeholder groups:

- The energy research community and companies
- Policy-makers in charge of R&I funding
- The private finance sector

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## Conference Agenda

Part I - Online Access to Risk Finance Conference: 25 May 2021	
09:30 – 09:35	<p><b>Welcome Speech</b>  <b>Speaker:</b> <i>Rainer Janssen, Managing Director Projects, WIP Renewable Energies, SMARTSPEND Coordinator and EUREC President</i></p>
09:35 – 09:45	<p><b>Introductory Speech</b>  <b>Speaker:</b> <i>Patrick Child, Deputy Director-General, DG RTD</i></p>
09:45 – 10:50	<p><b>Session 1 - The EU's funding and financing offer: new tools for a new decade</b>  <b>Objective:</b> Provide a better understanding of what is new in EU funding schemes for clean energy technology and answer energy community's specific questions regarding 2 types of EU funds. This will ensure they can find the most suitable funding (or funding's combination) for their project ideas.  <b>Interaction:</b> This will be a Q&amp;A intensive-session. During this session, participants will be informed of the call and will be able to ask questions. The session will be recorded and the video will be put online immediately after the event so all potential Project Proponents can see the answers given by the EC.</p> <p><b>Session 1.1 – InvestEU: New Opportunities in the Clean Energy Sector to Boost Investment, Innovation and Job Creation</b>  <b>Description:</b> This session will focus on the new opportunities that the next Investment Plan for 2021-2027 can provide via the European Investment Bank especially for energy demonstration projects with high technological risk, and the results from a previous project financed by the EIB.</p> <p><b>Moderated by:</b>  <i>Greg Arrowsmith, Secretary General, EUREC</i></p> <p><b>Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presentation:</b> What can the EIB Advisory do for you?  <i>Shiva Dustdar, Head of Division, Innovation Finance Advisory, European Investment Bank – 10 min</i></li> <li>• <b>Presentation:</b> TBC  <i>Martin Bruncko, Member of the Investment Committee, EIC Fund- 10 min</i></li> <li>• <b>Presentation:</b> Financing from the European Investment Bank: A success story  <i>Christopher Ridgewell, CEO, AW Energy - 10 min</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A:</b> Questions from moderator and audience - 10 min</p>

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	<p><b>Session 1.2 - ETS Innovation Fund: Driving Innovative Low-Carbon Technologies Towards the Market</b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> The presentation will focus on the ETS Innovation Fund call launched by the European Commission mid-2020 and its first evaluation results.</p> <p><b>Moderated by:</b> <i>Greg Arrowsmith, Secretary General, EUREC</i></p> <p><b>Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Presentation:</b> ETS Innovation Fund: current status <i>Roman Doubrava, Deputy Head of Unit Land Use and Finance for Innovation DG CLIMA – 15 min</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A:</b> Questions from moderator and audience - 10 min</p>
10.50-11.00	<b>Break</b>
11.00-12.00	<p><b>Session 2 – National/regional funding opportunities: exploitable synergies to accelerate the clean energy transition</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> This session will discuss the investment priorities that will be put forward in the 2021-2027 framework for regional cohesion, touching upon Cohesion Policy, the Just Transition Fund, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the Interreg Programme.</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Presentations will be followed by a 10mn slot for Q&amp;A to enable participants to interact directly with the speakers.</p> <p><b>Moderated by:</b> Nicolas de la Vega, Project Officer, EUREC</p> <p><b>Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Presentation:</b> The next Cohesion Policy Funds for energy projects with an innovative character and the Just Transition Fund <i>Mathieu Fichter, Policy Officer, DG REGIO – 20 min</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A for presentation 1:</b> Questions from moderator and audience - 10 min</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Presentation:</b> The Recovery and Resilience Facility <i>Michaela Holl, Agora EnergieWende – 10min</i></li> <li><b>Presentation:</b> The Interreg programme supporting clean energy <i>Mathieu Mori, Programme Director Interreg North-West Europe - 10min</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A for presentations 2 and 3:</b> Questions from moderator and audience - 10 min</p>
12.00-12.10	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> <i>Rainer Janssen, Managing Director Projects, WIP Renewable Energies, SMARTSPEND Coordinator and EUREC President</i></p>

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14:00 – 17:00	<p><b>Afternoon Match-Making Event – Find the Best Funding Opportunity to Bring Your Idea to Life</b></p> <p>Participants will have the opportunity to meet funding experts and private investors who will help them to find adequate funding solutions.</p> <p>EC officers, funding experts and private investors will receive clean energy technology developers in face2face online meetings, discussing and exchanging information on 20mn slots (B2Match).</p> <p>Participants will be able to meet with the following experts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>European Commission officers</i></li> <li>• <i>funding experts</i></li> <li>• <i>private investors</i></li> </ul>
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Part II - Online Access to Risk Finance Conference: 26 May 2021	
09:30 – 10:15	<p><b>Session 3 – Unlocking Private Funding for clean energy demonstration projects</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Provide to the participants a deeper knowledge regarding private funding for clean energy and useful opportunities that can help accelerate the deployment of clean energy technologies.</p> <p><b>Description:</b> This session will gather private finance providers, innovation experts and funding consultants who will share their views during a panel discussion on how to unlock private funding for energy demonstration projects, how to engage in collaborations with larger companies and how to accelerate the incubation of their business.</p> <p><b>Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening statements – 10mn</li> <li>• Panel discussion – 35mn.</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderated by:</b> <i>Remi Gruet, CEO, Ocean Energy Europe</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fernando Sandoval, Hub Manager, Enel Innovation Hub</i></li> <li>• <i>Gioacchino Bellia, Enel Green Power</i></li> <li>• <i>Pjotr van Schothorst, PVS Investments</i></li> <li>• <i>Michael Pachlatko, European Director, Joule Assets Europe</i></li> <li>• <i>Jordi Lopez Bernard, Business Creation Manager, InnoEnergy</i></li> </ul>
10.15-10.30	<b>Break</b>



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10:30 – 11:30	<p><b>Session 4 – How to access funding to achieve clean energy transition?</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To present the main findings of the SMARTSPEND project comprising the D2.2 ‘funding instruments for energy transition’ and provide some hands-on feedback from successful applicants on their experiences and best practices with related funds. This will be complemented with a discussion with an EC representative on updates about the EU 2030 climate targets and related objectives for energy demonstration projects.</p> <p><b>Description:</b> In order to trigger the discussion, the conclusions of the SMARTSPEND Report D2.2 ‘Funding instruments for energy innovation’ will be presented by Zabala. Two SMEs, which have successfully obtained European or private funding and commercialised their technologies, will be invited to provide their experience and recommendations on the use and best practices related to these funding instruments. This will be complemented with an outlook by one EC representative, who will provide updates about the EU related objectives for energy demonstration projects.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Marie Latour, Head of Brussels Office, Zabala</i></li> <li>• <i>Fernando Morales Rojo, Lead Analyst, Highview Power</i></li> <li>• <i>Thomas Messervey, R2M Energy Venture</i></li> <li>• <i>Jens Bartholmes, Policy Officer, DG ENER</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Moderated by:</b> <i>Brittney Elzare, Policy Manager, EASE</i></p> <p><b>Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of panelists – 5mn</li> <li>• <b>Presentation:</b> SMARTSPEND Report D2.2 “Mapping report on funding instruments for energy innovation (update)” <i>Marie Latour, Head of Brussels Office, Zabala</i> – 5mn</li> <li>• Panel discussion – 50mn</li> </ul>
11:30 – 11:45	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> <i>Rainer Janssen, Managing Director Projects, WIP Renewable Energies, SMARTSPEND Coordinator and EUREC President</i></p>
14:00 – 17:00	<p><b>Afternoon Match-Making Event – Find the Best Funding Opportunity to Bring Your Idea to Life</b></p> <p>Participants will have the opportunity to meet funding experts and private investors who will help them to find adequate funding solutions.</p> <p>EC officers, funding experts and private investors will receive clean energy technology developers in face2face online meetings, discussing and exchanging information on 20mn slots (B2Match).</p> <p>Participants will be able to meet with the following experts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>European Commission officers</i></li> <li>• <i>funding experts</i></li> </ul>

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- *private investors*

### Part III - Online Access to Risk Finance Conference: 27 May 2021

09:30 – 13:00	<p><b>Morning Match-Making Event – Find the Best Funding Opportunity to Bring Your Idea to Life</b></p> <p>Participants will have the opportunity to meet funding experts and private investors who will help them to find adequate funding solutions.</p> <p>EC officers, funding experts and private investors will receive clean energy technology developers in face2face online meetings, discussing and exchanging information on 15mn slots (B2Match).</p> <p>Participants will be able to meet with the following experts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>European Commission officers</i></li> <li>• <i>funding experts</i></li> <li>• <i>private investors</i></li> </ul>
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## Introduction

# 25 May

### Welcome Speech

*Rainer Janssen, Managing Director Projects, WIP Renewable Energies*

The conference starts and participants are welcomed.

Rainer Janssen thanks project partners, organisers of the conference and speakers, and introduces the topic of clean energy technologies and the urgent need for more research in innovation of these technologies.

Clean energy technologies are essential in achieving Europe's decarbonisation targets by 2050. Crucial importance is lying on bringing and establishing clean energy technologies on the market, overcoming for some technologies of the Valley of Death and financing these new technologies.

The conference agenda is presented and Rainer introduces Patrick Child.

### Introductory Speech

*Patrick Child, Deputy Director-General, DG RTD*

Energy transition has a central role in the European Green Deal and the post-covid recovery; There is a need for massive investment in research and innovation in order to achieve our massive ambition towards the EU Green Deal; collaboration and cooperation of all stakeholders involved in the energy transition is crucial.

Patrick Child mentions funding tools such as Horizon Europe, the Innovation Fund and Next Generation EU.

Competition rules in the EU are being reviewed by the European Commission (EC) and it is also preparing a renewed sustainable finance strategy and legislative initiatives on sustainable corporate governance to facilitate green investments.

The revision of the Fit for 55 Legislative Package is ongoing, including the revision of key instruments in the 2030 Climate Energy Package to help achieve the EU objective of being the first carbon-neutral continent by 2050.

The Covid pandemic is having negative impacts on private and public funding for clean energy and is likely to hold back the development of new clean technology, therefore cooperation is essential.

There is a current global momentum to take actions globally towards a clean energy transition, this is only possible through international cooperation.

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The green and digital post-covid recovery is requiring strong intention to research in innovation investment which will be more and more important. Clean energy is at the heart of the EU agenda.

**Q&A moderated by Greg Arrowsmith, Secretary General, EUREC**

**1) Question from audience:** *Is the UK eligible for Horizon Europe?*

**Answer:** Mr. Child mentions that in principle, as part of the agreement on Brexit, the UK will be an associated partner for Horizon Europe and therefore has access to it. There are still discussions going on regarding sensitive parts of the programme that may be restricted to EU members states only.

**2) Question from audience:** *What are the next steps for the launch of the Horizon Europe missions?*

**Answer:** Mr. Child explains that the Horizon Europe missions were presented last September (2020), and the EC is now working on the Implementation Plan which should be available by the summer.

**3) Question from audience:** *Are there any updates on when the deadline is for the energy call under Horizon Europe?*

**Answer:** This will happen most likely by the end of the year.

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## Session 1 - The EU's funding and financing offer: new tools for a new decade

### Session 1.1 – New Opportunities in the Clean Energy Sector to Boost Investment, Innovation and Job Creation

#### Financing from the European Investment Bank: A success story

*Christopher Ridgewell, CEO, AW Energy*

- Wave energy is allowing to further decarbonise the grid and enables to lower the costs of zero carbon electric fuels. Moreover, wave energy is filling the void in the winter when there is less sun.
- In 2014, AW Energy was developing a grid connected prototype, the performance was validated by DNVGL, and the project is being successful in the ESB's WestWave competitive tendering for a 5MW Project.
- Pelamis was collapsing in 2014 and the WestWave project is changing their plan and asking AW Energy to build a demonstration to validate the technology but as the prototype is being built, they are entering the Valley of Death. From there it was becoming difficult to raise funds.
- The European Investment Bank (EIB) was launching the InnovFin Energy Demonstration Projects in June 2015.
- To further develop their idea and to bring their project to life, AW Energy is pitching their idea to the EIB in 2015 to ask for funding.
- In 2016, the contract with the EIB is being signed.
- The development of the first WaveRoller technology is being finalised in 2019.
- The WaveRoller technology has now been in the water for two consecutive winters and is acting as an artificial reef, is monitoring the environmental impact and is allowing for more research to be conducted on wave energy.
- The financing from the IEB is enabling AW Energy to apply to H2020 call for their project called MegaRoller which is helping to advance the technology.

#### What can the EIB Advisory do for you?

*Shiva Dustdar, Head of Division, Innovation Finance Advisory, EIB*

- The European Investment Bank (EIB) is aspiring to become Europe's Climate Bank. It is the world's largest multilateral tender and the biggest provider of climate finance. 76.8 billion euros were invested in 2020.

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- The EIB objectives are to invest a trillion in climate action and environmental sustainability in the critical decade from 2021-2030; to increase the share of financing dedicated to climate action to reach 50% by 2050; and to align all financing activities with the principles and goals of the Paris Agreement by the end of 2020.
- EIB is providing support by:
  - Lending loans, guarantees and equity participation
  - Blending EIB loans and EU grants
  - Advising through a holistic and structural approach
  - EIB is providing support to the Renewable Energy (RE) sector through a variety of products such as corporate loans, project finance, equity products, EU Risk guarantee schemes, etc.
  - EIB is supporting RE with both traditional lending, higher risk blending and advisory solutions.
  - Advisory Services are playing a key role in preparing projects for relevant financing solutions and engaging with RE eco-systems to understand the bottlenecks and opportunities and unlock new financing possibilities.

#### Backing visionary entrepreneurs: the European Innovation Council Fund

*Martin Bruncko, Member of the Investment Committee, EIC Fund*

- Raising money for new tech companies is difficult because there are very high levels of risks and it is taking many years until the product can reach the market.
- It is more difficult facing the Valley of Death for tech companies than for digital companies.
- This is why there is the need for blended finance (combination of grant equity, debt investments or insurance-like products) in which different funders for technologies are being combined at different levels of development.
- The EIC Fund is a venture capital fund and the only shareholder is the EC. It was established last summer in June 2020 and is an open-ended fund.
- Their mission is to bridge the critical financing gap faced by innovative science and engineering-based companies and therefore to scale up breakthrough European innovations. No more than 50% are being invested in equity and the remaining 50% is coming from private investors.

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- EIC is investing in any sector, across all EU countries, but climate is one of the top priorities.
- When applying to H2020 it is possible to indicate to be considered for equity investment and not only grant. The EIC is inviting only around 10% of applicants for an interview and only 2% are selected, so it is a very competitive process.
- The EIC is not aiming to replace/displace the market but to de-risk the projects and attract other investors.

### Q&A moderated by Greg Arrowsmith, Secretary General, EUREC

**1) Question from moderator:** *Do you think the EIC fund is going to change the capital market for deep technologies?*

**Answer:** Mr. Bruncko specifies the objective is to accelerate the growth of the market, but not to shape the market and set the rules. This would be a disservice for all the start-ups in the market.

**2) Question from audience:** *Can the EIB help specifically for coal regions in transition?*

**Answer:** Ms. Shiva Dustdar replies it is being put in place and transition in these regions is essential.

**3) Question from audience:** *Can a relationship emerge between solar-thermal companies and the EIB?*

**Answer:** Ms. Dustdar clarifies, it is always useful to reach to the EIB and to start doing research together.

**4) Question from audience:** *Could the EIB fund projects which relate to rebounding, whether it is through a web-based software solution or through a technology hardware?*

**Answer:** It was explained that the EIB does finance projects that would not be considered as bankable. The EIB is flexible and always looking at the various cash streams despite some risk appetite on some projects.

## Session 1.2 – ETS Innovation Fund: Driving Innovative Low-Carbon Technologies Towards the Market

The ETS Innovation Fund: current status

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*Roman Doubrava, Deputy Head of Unit Land Use and Finance for Innovation, DG CLIMA*

- The Innovation Fund is launching the call for large-scale projects around October. In 2020, the Innovation fund was investing EUR 1bn.
- 311 proposals were submitted across technologies. Out of these, 70 were invited to the second stage of application.
- The best 70 project are coming from across all sectors and technologies: hydrogen, CCUS, bio-based, renewables, storage. They are being selected on degree of innovation and project maturity. The projects that are showing insufficient maturity highlights the opportunity to still improve further and stand a better chance of being invited for future calls.
- The projects that are selected are showing robustness, a solid implementation plan and business plan, and financial, technical and operational maturity.
- Those that are not selected scored low on financial maturity as they are lacking diversity in financial sources, including secured equity funding, lack of clear financial plan and viability from the start of the project.
- Insufficient cash flows projections to cover expected debt financing amounts
- Projected cash flow covered only a limited number of years and not the full project lifetime
- The best practice for operational maturity is devising a project implementation timeline that is comprehensive, realistic and consistent with the project’s technical and financial elements.
- The role of all consortium partners needs to be well described and illustrated.
- The Innovation Fund is launching the call for small-scale projects in December. In 2020 it had an overall investment of EUR 100 million. There were 232 projects from across all sectors all over Europe. Most proposals received are focusing on hydrogen followed by solar energy.
- Steps for the next large-scale call: faster evaluation, more advice and more financing are needed. Will launch in October 2021 and the deadline in February 2022.



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## Session 2 - National/regional funding opportunities: exploitable synergies to accelerate the clean energy transition

### Cohesion Policy Funds and the Just Transition Fund: supporting energy projects with an innovative character

*Mathieu Fichter, Policy Officer Sustainable Growth, DG REGIO*

- The Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 amounts to over 1/3 of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework. This consists of several funds, and it aims to reduce disparities between Europe's regions, strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion and to contribute to EU priorities.
- The policy is targeting 5 policy objectives: A more competitive and smarter Europe; A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe; A more connected Europe; A more social and inclusive Europe; A Europe closer to citizens
- The second policy objective is targeting a greener, low-carbon Europe (including energy transition, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk management). It is very broad and leaves member states to find something for their own needs and own proposals.
- For all types of regions, 30% of funding is going for climate and clean technologies.
- Some of the areas of EU expenditure and applicable principles include :
  - Energy efficiency first principle – reducing demand before looking at supply
  - Support the renovation wave
  - In RES: priority on innovation/non mature technologies and community-based RES
  - Avoid investment in stranded assets – Do No Significant Harm principle
  - Fossil fuel exclusion in 2021-27 Cohesion policy (with limited exemptions)
  - Just Transition – social dimension and affordability. It will focus on focusing on the people as 50 million Europeans suffer from energy poverty and on territories facing serious socio-economic challenges deriving from the climate-neutrality transition.
  - Added value of Cooperation: cross-border/interregional/macro regional approaches
  - National energy and climate plans (NECPs) as the reference for the investment programmes
  - Link EU funding with existing strategic and planning frameworks

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- Preparation of a project pipeline
- Expertise and technical assistance are key enabling factors
- Partnership principle: build ownership

### Q&A moderated by Nicolas de la Vega, Project Officer, EUREC

**1) Question from moderator:** *Are you able to modify the programmes once adopted?*

**Answer:** Mr. Fichter replied the new programme that is being adopted for 2021-2027 can still be updated. Most of the programmes are amended if significant changes occur.

**2) Question from audience:** *What is the timeline for the new Cohesion Policy, will the EC accelerate the approval of national programmes? When are the first proposals?*

**Answer:** Mr. Fichter clarified that the regulations need to be formally published; they should be published around summer. Only then member states can start submitting their programmes. Then there is a deadline of 3 months before being approved by the EC. There is an overlap in programmes, the money from 2014-20 can be transferred to the new programme. There is no gap, funding is always available, but most calls will start from 2022 onwards.

**3) Question from audience:** *Is the UK still eligible for the regional funding?*

**Answer:** It was mentioned that it is possible that the UK will still participate in the Interreg programme.

**4) Question from audience:** *What are you expecting to see on rescaling with the Just Transition Fund?*

**Answer:** Mr. Fichter explained that a number of economic activities will be scaled down or will completely disappear and this means that people working there will lose their jobs. It is expected from the authorities to invest in people so that they can work in new sectors. This is in the hands of the local regional authorities to develop programmes to support dedicated measures.

**5) Question from the audience:** *Energy poverty is tackled differently in EU countries; how can Cohesion Policy improve this?*

**Answer:** ‘Cohesion Policy can help Member States and regions to invest in energy efficient buildings and tackle energy poverty. This is region-based so it is up to member states to come to us.’

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## Interreg North-West Europe supporting clean energy

*Mathieu Mori, Interreg North-West Programme Director*

- North-West Europe is playing a crucial role as it is a populated area which fosters the dynamics in the EU. However, this is coming at a cost, this region is also one of the biggest CO2 emitters and one of the highest consuming energy regions in the EU.
- The NWE programme 2014-20 is financing 102 projects on the priorities of innovation, low carbon and resources and materials efficiency with an investment of EUR 376M ERDF allocated.
- Interreg is financing both public and private projects.
- Discussions are still ongoing between member states on the many aspects on what the next programme will focus on.

The priorities for the programme are going to be:

- Smart climate resilience for NEW territories
- Smart and just energy transition
- Transition towards a place-based circular economy
- 6 new regions are going to join the future NEW Interreg programme.
- The UK government is not going to pursue cooperation with the Interreg programme, the EC is however keeping the door opened for the UK to be considered as Third country. This means that the government has to fund their participation, so it is in the hands of the UK government if they want to join the programme.
- The first call for the project of the programme 2021-27 will be in the spring 2022.

## The Recovery and Resilience Facility

*Michaela Holl, Senior Associate on Green Deal, Green Recovery and Green Finance, AgoraEnergieWende*

- The Recovery and resilience facility (RRF) is a very large fund at around 700 billion in loans and grants, it also has one of the largest shares dedicated to climate action at

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37%. The RRF's money needs to be spent fast which means that 70% have to be committed by the end of 2023.

- The RRF is also including a big reform aspect. The plans that are considering some reforms are strongly encouraged.
- Once the plans are being endorsed by the EC and council, then the member states are receiving 13% upfront and then the rest upon the achievement of their plan.
- 7 flagships have to be strongly taken into account when submitting recovery plans.

Assessment criteria that are included in the RRF:

- Balanced response
- Addresses challenges identified CSRs
- Growth, resilience and social impact
- Do no significant harm principle
- Green transition
- Digital transition
- Lasting impact
- Effective monitoring and implementation
- Reasonable and plausible cost estimates
- Robust control systems

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### Q&A moderated by Nicolas de la Vega, Project Officer, EUREC

**1) Question from audience:** *How come Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc are in your programme at Interreg?*

**Answer:** Mr. Mori explains that these regions are not part of Interreg NWE's geographical coverage. When it would be relevant for the project consortium to have a partner outside the geographical area, and if the Member State agrees, then these partners can join the programme. It needs to be well explained why this is relevant to the programme.

**2) Question from audience:** *I would like to join a Member State's recovery plan, where should I move to implement my ideas?*

**Answer:** Ms. Holl clarifies that it might be possible to influence Member States that have not submitted their plans. Some Member States have provided their plans, but have not yet provided details on the projects they will fund.

**3) Question from the audience:** *What happens to the remaining money that is not invested through loans?*

**Answer:** She said that loans are interesting for a Member States that would otherwise pay high interests when looking for a loan on their own. The loans taken through the EC have to be taken through a scrutiny process.

**4) Question from the audience:** *Do you see opportunities to move ahead with the cohesion policy and the RRF?*

**Answer:** Speakers see complementarity and positive dynamic between the RRF and cohesion policy. Both reinforce each other and in the case of RRF it offers more opportunities for large-scale projects that could not have been done under cohesion policy.

### Closing Remarks

*Rainer Janssen, Managing Director Projects, WIP Renewable Energies*

Rainer Janssen is thanking the speakers for their presentations and answering questions.

- The main takeaway from the keynote by Patrick Child is the relevance of clean energy technologies in the framework of the Green Deal.
- National research and national funding are currently declining. International cooperation is therefore essential towards decarbonisation.

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- Christopher Ridgewell’s presentation stressed the importance of financing provided by the EIB for clean innovative technologies, as demonstrated by the WaveRoller.
- The presentation by Shiva Dustdar gave useful tips on how to apply for funding through the EIB. Hydrogen will be a hot topic for the coming years.
- Martin Bruncko’s presentation focused on the EIC Fund and the fact that this venture capital fund is not meant to replace the EC’s venture capital fund.
- Roman Doubrava gave an overview on the EU ETS Innovation Fund, the first call has already been launched and 70 projects passed the first round. The financial maturity is essential. The Innovation Fund is not looking for research projects but for future business opportunities.

Rainer Janssen is thanking the audience for their attendance and questions during the Q&A. He is inviting the audience to attend the afternoon match-making event.

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### Session 3 - Unlocking Private Funding for clean energy demonstration projects

#### Panel discussion with:

*Michael Pachlatko, European Director, Joule Assets Europe*

*Fernando Sandoval, Enel Innovation Hub*

*Maria Giovanna Vertuccio, Enel Green Power*

*Pjotr van Schothorst, PVS Investments*

*Jordi Lopez Bernard, Corporate Business Creation Services Manager, EIT InnoEnergy*

*Moderated by Remi Gruet, CEO Ocean Energy Europe*

#### Question to Jordi Lopez Bernard and Fernando Sandoval:

*Can you explain how your organisation engages in collaborations with start-ups or small companies with innovative solutions?*

#### Answer from Jordi Lopez Bernard:

He mentions different levels of engagement with start-ups: starting from the selection process until the exit of the company. It includes the preparation of the business case to be presented to the investment committee; once approved the terms and conditions are agreed; an action plan and services to be provided should be agreed. A staff member of EIT InnoEnergy will be in charge of delivering and coordinating the support and connecting the company to the ecosystem and right partners.

#### Answer from Fernando Sandoval:

Mr. Sandoval refers to the innovability model in which innovation and sustainability are put together and where innovation is understood as a tool and sustainability as the goal. Enel cooperates with different players: universities, research and tech centres, major vendors, start-ups and SMEs.

For start-ups and SMEs, Enel is following a venture-client approach e.g. to look for the best way to collaborate and to engage with the start up in a commercial relationship. This comprises a PRC, or pilot test. Once successful, the scale up of the start-up within the organisation is being implemented, e.g., the start-up becomes a regular supplier of Enel. The envisaged goal is to bring innovation into Enel's products, services and processes and to enable the start-up to grow. With this process, Enel provides business and validation of the

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solutions and technologies to the start-ups. Within the past five years, Enel has worked with more than 400 start-ups', among which around 100 have become regular suppliers of Enel.

**Question to Jordi Lopez Bernard and Fernando Sandoval:** *What does your organization look for when deciding which innovative solutions to support?*

**Answer from Fernando Sandoval:**

Mr. Sandoval mentioned that Enel usually follows an innovation to business approach including an innovation need or challenge Enel wants to solve. This comprises the right fit between the solution of the start-up/SME and the challenge Enel wants to solve. Enel's units look for solutions that are close to the market or already in a commercial launch. This is to ensure that the access to the market will be fast. Finally, Enel assesses the teams and milestones achieved by the start-up: projects start-ups have participated in pilots they have developed, customers they already have and investors and accelerators backing the start-up. Enel does not look at the financials of the start-up, but wants to ensure that it can engage in a long relationship with the start-up. Enel's innovation unit decides on the start-up selection as experts are able to validate the solution from a technical point of view. This is to ensure the right validation of the solutions including the solution itself and how it integrates in Enel's processes, teams, systems and a valid business case.

**Answer from Jordi Lopez Bernard:**

EIT InnoEnergy looks for solutions that can take part in the energy transition and deal with the current challenges such as CO2 reduction and cost reduction of energy. EIT InnoEnergy looks for early-stage companies that have some proof of concept demonstrating that the technology is viable, innovative and scalable as well as for the market opportunity of the solution.

EIT InnoEnergy looks at the team and its complementarity and how it is able to execute the plan. There is an internal tool to assess the competences of the entrepreneurs, not with the intention of discarding anyone but to know how the team can be supported and complemented. EIT InnoEnergy looks at the financials of the start-up. In addition, potential customers are involved at an early stage so they can provide their feedback.

**Question to Michael Pachlatko:** *What are the key risks in clean energy projects and what mitigation measures can be used?*

**Answer from Michael Pachlatko:** Joule Assets Europe is looking at building integrated measures, and not at stand-alone and infrastructure size measures. A common ground exists on the size factor: anything in small scale is more time consuming for investors to assess



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compared to larger scale. For Joule Assets Europe the key is to de-risk wherever possible as it pays for it with a risk premium and subsequently risks can be minimised, both credit risk and performance risk.

He recommends project developers to focus closely on carbon price and ESG. Projects of all sizes and all innovative technologies should follow rigorously these two factors so that investors can be sure that their investments are being compliant with the EU Taxonomy. In case CO2 can be saved, it should be measured and certified. Joule Assets Europe sees an additional 2 to 4% of IRR added to a project by the current CO2 price. At the current prices, it is quite a substantial credit enhancement added by the CO2 price.

**Question to Michael Pachlatko and Pjotr van Schothorst:** *As a private investor/intermediary, what do you look for in projects that are pitched to you?*

**Answer from Michael Pachlatko:** Joule Assets Europe looks at the track record, qualifications, certifications and forms its opinion on how much potential it sees in the contractor and what it brings forward. It looks at building integrated measures and at the client as a counterpart. Mitigation measures, guarantees, and off-balance sheet solutions take the credit risk away from the end client. In addition, it is important to ‘know your customer’ and who will be the operator of the project.

These key factors are analysed upfront and Joule Assets Europe tries to eliminate unsuitable aspects as quickly as possible. Efficiency in the process and enhanced transparency are increased so that project developers and clients know immediately which path to take.

Concerning the ‘size’, two factors are important:

- smaller sized projects need to show a larger pipeline of replicable project opportunities.
- as regards the complexity of numerous small sized projects, standardisation is key.

**Answer from Pjotr van Schothorst:**

PVS Investments invests in clean energy start-up’s that often originate from a university or research institution or have a history before the start-up was even initiated. At this state in clean energy projects, the technology is the essential one. PVS Investments investigates the technology first, its impact, scale up, how much CO2 it can save or how much cleaner electricity it can generate. The technology comes first. Mr. van Schothorst mentioned that as an early-stage investor PVS Investments is working with start-ups with no clients and does its own assessments on whether there will be clients for this solution.

**Question to Maria Giovanna Vertuccio:** *What are promising technologies you are recently looking to fund as Enel Green Power/PVS?*

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**Answer from Maria Giovanna Vertuccio:** Enel Green Power/PVS leads the transition toward a 100% share in renewables and looks for all technologies that help to achieve this goal. In particular, Enel focuses on dedicated activity streams:

- Digitalisation and platformisation towards an efficient autonomous world. This means to implement automation at 100% level in our processes, involving robotics and applying artificial intelligence, remote control and assistance. This will increase safety for workers and the efficiency of our power plants in construction and operation.
- Sustainable and renewable growth. Find efficient technologies to maximise the valorisation of the resources and to reduce the production costs. This also means finding solutions to minimise the impact on the ecosystem. For example, for a PV utility, an objective would be to reduce land use.
- Solutions in storage systems integrated to renewable power plants. Innovative system integration solutions which could allow our power plants to be more flexible and make the grid safer.
- Green hydrogen. Enel is looking at the new generation of electrolyzers with low costs and high performance. This also includes alternative storage methods and innovative integration schemes to achieve higher flexibility.

**Question to Maria Giovanna Vertuccio:** *What are the renewable energy technologies that you have seen grow the most in the latest years within your organisation and why?*

**Answer from Maria Giovanna Vertuccio:** She mentions that wind and solar technologies have been the most interesting in the previous years. Enel's goal is to increase these technologies in the future. Its mission is to try to reach a RES capacity of 145 GW/h by 2030. Solar and wind technologies are seen as more interesting, as there is a high increase in the technologies' maturity. It is important to take all renewable technologies into account but solar and wind are seen as the main important technologies on which Enel will focus for the next years.

**Question from moderator to Michael Pachlatko and Pjotr van Schothorst:** *How important are market visibility, political support and financial support when you assess a start-up?*

**Answer from Michael Pachlatko:** He agrees that all aspects mentioned in this question are important. For Joule Assets Europe the more innovative and 'exotic' ideas with high potential on paper, public funding, co-funding or risk-sharing facility would be more

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important. The market visibility was mentioned as a key factor on all scales whether it's large infrastructure measures or smaller technologies. Qualitative factors are also considered in the assessment: *'what's the competition like? Does it work on other continents? Is the management able to grow this? Does it make the right financial decisions? Is there a CFO or is it just the CEO making these decisions?'*

It can be observed that these funds have started to also allocate a private equity compartment. In conclusion, there seems to be demand for investing in the ideas and the growth of start-ups in this sector.

**Answer from Pjotr van Schothorst:** Mr. van Schothorst supports the previous comment and amends that even at early stage all these factors are important. He emphasizes that not all these factors can be expected to be in place early on. For example, one start-up in the Netherlands called 'Oceans for Energy' intends to commercialise floating offshore technologies. If the scale is big enough it can work and can provide a lot of energy in the long term. Nevertheless, the difficulty is that the existing wind farm operators do not want anything to be located offshore other than their windmills, in case something goes. Who would be responsible and what would be the cost of the insurance? Mr. van Schothorst mentions that the government can take an active approach to enable that something innovative can happen. This proactive governmental approach has only recently started to come into play. The risk existed when he invested in this company and he has anticipated that measures could come into place in the future as otherwise this could have negative impacts for such innovative new technologies.

**Question from moderator:** *Is there a no-go criterion which will always stop you from considering a technology or start-up?*

**Answer from Maria Giovanna Vertuccio:** She mentions that the model is to apply the solution in Enel's business directly into a pilot test. In case the solution of the start-up is responding to the needs, the solution is analysed by technical experts. Once technical experts agree to apply the solution, then the costs, technical features and other aspects are identified. If successful and the management approves the budget for the solution, Enel advances with the pilot project. If the results align with the needs and are positive, Enel can propose to integrate the start-up directly in the business to scale up the solution in other power plants.

**Answer from Fernando Sandoval:** Mr. Sandoval complements, that the Enel Innovation Hub is one step ahead due to the scouting in the ecosystem. He mentions that the innovation hub receives a challenge from the business line, scouts the different solutions in the market,

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presents the most fitted ones to the business line. The business line would select the ones that are going to be processed and finally the ones that will be presented to the innovation committee, which takes a final decision. Mr. Sandoval mentions an entire screening process to work with the best start-ups in the best position to fit the challenges. In this context more than 10,000 start-ups have been screened, out of which nearly 3,000 were evaluated and 300 that Enel has developed projects with.

**Answer from Jordi Lopez Bernard:** Mr. Lopez Bernard mentions as the red-line the negative impact on the environment. EIT InnoEnergy supports start-ups that have a positive impact. EIT InnoEnergy does not give financial support, it provides added-value services.

**Question from audience:** *How should EU State aid guidelines change to enable you to invest more?*

**Answer from Michael Pachlatko:** Joule Assets Europe, considers energy performance contracting as off-balance sheet for public administration. Michael Pachlatko mentioned new types of state aid such as in Italy the 110% super bonus. He underlined the positive effect this measure had in Italy and that it is being considered at European scale.

**Question from audience to Enel:** *Can you share a list of specific topics Enel is interested in?*

**Answer from Maria Giovanna Vertuccio:** Enel Green Power is looking for technologies related to renewable power plants, mainly solar and wind. For example:

- Automatisations and digitalisation solutions: robotics, AI and virtual assistance.
- Solutions related to green hydrogen such as new electrolyzers, storage and system integration solutions.
- Solutions in storage systems integrated to renewable power plants in order to find new market opportunities. Innovative system integration solutions which could allow power plants to be more flexible and make the grid safer.

**Answer from Fernando Sandoval:** Mr. Sandoval explains that the Enel Innovation Hub covers all the parts of its value chain e.g., power generation plants and the distribution grids. He mentions the fast pace of the work, where for instance, in the past year 60 needs were covered and in 2021 it is 20 already.

Apart from the challenges in power generation, he mentions the challenges in distribution infrastructure networks. The Enel Innovation Hub has worked on smart grids, but is also going beyond it to not only take into consideration the digital view of Enel's smart grid but also to anticipate future developments in the grid.

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Interesting points for Enel Innovation Hub would be data, which can be processed, regarding traffic, traffic lights, city lights, smart charging of electric vehicles, as well as cybersecurity.

**Question from audience:** *How reliant is private financing on existing insurances for high-risk technologies?*

**Answer from Michael Pachlatko:** He explains that insurances do not really exist for high-risk technologies. Insurers would build their models on technologies they have a track record in measuring and modelling. The approach he recommends is to have a precise longer-term plan for investors outlining when similar projects will be developed, when the technology would be demonstrated and when it can be resold at lower rates.

**Question from moderator:** *Would you be interested in the European Commission coming up with a guarantee scheme that takes away technological risks from high-risk projects?*

**Answer from Michael Pachlatko:** Clarifies that Joule Assets Europe would be interested in such option, even though the specifications of it are not clear. In this context it was mentioned that the European Investment Bank finances less risky projects and the returns are well-known.

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## Session 4 - How to access funding to achieve clean energy transition?

### Mapping report on funding instruments for energy innovation

*Marie Latour, Head of Brussels Office, Zabala*

- Zabala innovation exists for 35 years, is active in 13 places around the world and has more than 340 employees. ZABALA's role is to help design and speed up internal R&D, dynamise R&D opportunities, extend public funding opportunities for its clients as to help them co-finance their own R&D activities. ZABALA is an expert in public funding at regional, national and EU level.
- A graph was presented outlining the time it takes for clean technologies to go from research to market penetration, reflecting the importance of private and public support to allow solutions to finalise in a market solution.
- The report represents types of existing public and private funding instruments in Europe, in certain countries and regions. Case studies from companies, which have benefitted from different instruments for the development of their solutions are presented.

Several elements are presented, which are important in the European context:

- The Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-PLAN) with 10 key actions that are driving the priorities of the EU in terms of clean energy solutions for which the EU is funding R&D.
- The European Green Deal, which aims at making Europe carbon-neutral by 2050.
- An overview of the existing Recovery & Resilience Facility plan and the amounts allocated for loans for each member State with overall, over €84 billion foreseen for clean energy related activities.

The report covers 10 different European transnational funding instruments which cover different technology readiness levels (TRL):

- Horizon Europe covers all TRLs. Several instruments are complementary to Horizon Europe, such as the Clean Energy Transition Partnership, which replaces all the ERA-Nets which existed before in the energy sector.
- Eureka, a transnational program which exists since the 80's with two specific programs: Eurogia and Eurostars.

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- The report provides details on different funding programs with their specificities: Invest Europe, the Innovation Fund, the European Investment Bank, Interreg, the EEA & Norway Grants, LIFE, Connecting Europe Facility and InnoEnergy.

An innovation scoreboard has been included in the report, ranking all EU countries according to how innovative they are. Using this scoreboard, eight countries were selected among innovation leaders (Denmark and Sweden), strong innovators (Germany, France and Portugal) and moderate innovators (Cyprus, Spain and Italy). Based on this method, ten European regions were selected in the report from innovation leader countries, strong innovator countries and moderate innovator countries.

In addition, the report covers an overview of private sector funding, including different types of funds and investors at the seed level of funding and at a later stage.

- The report covers about 100 European investors or funds with experience on clean energy technologies.
- Six case studies of companies with different funding needs and from different sectors and countries are being presented in the report.

The report provides guidance to European funding programs and supports the identification of instruments for project and specific needs. It can be downloaded at the SMARTSPEND website: [www.smartspend.eu](http://www.smartspend.eu) .

## Panel discussion

*Marie Latour, Head of Brussels Office, Zabala*

*Fernando Morales Rojo, Lead Analyst, Highview Power*

*Thomas Messervey, Co-founder, R2M Energy Ventures*

*Jens Bartholmes, Policy Officer, DG ENER*

Moderated by Brittney Elzare, EASE Policy Manager

**Question to Marie Latour:** *As a funding consultant, which funding instruments would you recommend to SMEs at national and EU level?*

**Answer from Marie Latour:** Ms. Latour explains SMEs should look at regional and national funding instruments first since there is less competition than at EU level. In case no adequate instrument at these levels can be identified, applicants should consider EU instruments and take their TRL into account. The EIC Accelerator was mentioned as relevant, but only for deep-tech technologies which expect to be a unicorn in Europe. EIT InnoEnergy

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was mentioned as relevant for start-up's as well as Eurostar's for R&I intensive SMEs. For pilot solutions it could be interesting to join a Horizon Europe consortium.

**Question to Thomas Messervey:** *What is your experience with innovative funding mechanisms at national level?*

**Answer from Thomas Messervey:** Mr. Messervey is encouraging SMEs to look at all collaborative instruments, which give opportunities to expand networks. In addition, he mentions the public and private funding landscape to be very complex in terms of matching the right tool to the right task. The challenge is finding the right projects for the right ideas and project developers, which can provide support.

Furthermore, a combination of public and different private funding can be interesting, for example, crowd-funding. Different crowd-funding platforms exist, which can be equity or landing based. This represents an interesting way to provide people with the opportunity to fund sustainability. Mr. Messervey gives the example of an EV charging point, which he acquired by participating in an equity-based crowd-fund into e-mobility charging points outside of supermarkets. He further explains currently the business model seems not very attractive, because of missing EVs on the roads. Nevertheless, in five years numbers have changed and it could be possible to combine charging a vehicle with getting a free coffee. This could encourage people to get involved by investing directly instead of buying stocks or giving money to banks with 0% interest.

**Question to Fernando Morales Rojo:** *What is your experience with private and public funding from the perspective of projects with high commercial and technology risk?*

**Answer from Fernando Morales Rojo:** He explains that the technology is demonstrated at pilot scale to then build the business case for a pre-commercial demonstrator. At low TRL levels Highview Power would rely on government funding. In this context, more than two rounds might be necessary to complete this stage. It would be therefore important to know how many rounds are needed to develop the full system. Another approach would be to reach out to corporate venture capital stakeholders who have a strategic interest in developing new technologies and finding new applications for their existing kit. Some existing manufacturers were interested in the technology and were willing to pay for licences, which can be seen as another source of revenue. The markets are not yet mature and so building the business case has proven to be difficult. It was mentioned that Highview Power is currently looking at the Innovation Fund as it is well designed and covers CapEx and OpEx. Some challenging aspects are bankability and financial stability since innovative markets are concerned about which technical requirements and commercial frameworks are



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still not mature. Regulations enter into force and are changing conditions. The assets the company is developing last for up to 40 years and this certainty within the current landscape is difficult. To build a business-case based on revenue streams, which are considered as State Aid, it can be challenging to mix different grant schemes.

**Question to Jens Bartholmes:** *You have heard a lot of inputs from different stakeholders on Horizon2020, how will Horizon Europe be different?*

**Answer from Jens Bartholmes:** The EC did an interim evaluation in the second part of Horizon2020 to start with all lessons learned for Horizon Europe. Some very important changes were mentioned comprising the main novelties of the work program:

- 1) The European Innovation Council as a new concept. It aims at supporting breakthrough technologies and game-changing innovations. It will have a budget of €10 billion and will support the innovations that are normally too risky for private investors. It is very interesting for SMEs.
- 2) Another new instrument are the missions including five missions on climate, cities, cancer, oceans and soil. Those are now in the final preparation phase and will be adopted soon. The missions are equipped with serious funding (for example, €1 billion for cities). Those are instruments that should create impact beyond the R&I sphere. For cities, it is estimated that the total amount of funding leveraged for this mission will be in the order of €100 billion. This instrument will conceive new ways of financing city contracts. The EC is encouraging all stakeholders to make this new instrument successful.
- The outcomes of R&I funds will be publicly accessible. The results will be made available for them to be used and not to be lost.
- An overhaul of the funding landscape for partnerships has been completed, which are all grouped and co-funded big partnerships, for example, the 'Clean Energy Transition' partnership with more than €500 million from Member States and Horizon Europe.

Furthermore, it was mentioned that the work programs are a good match for those wishing to work on climate and energy and namely cross-sectoral solutions for climate transition, sustainable, secure and competitive energy supply, efficient sustainable and inclusive energy use. The Horizon Europe work program which was

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previously mainly dedicated to energy includes now climate, energy and transport. While the destinations focus a bit more on the specific topics, climate, energy and mobility are overarching.

**Question from audience:** *Do you think that all the different funding instruments are able to minimise the carbon leakage and achieve the 55% carbon emissions reduction target by 2030.*

**Answer from Marie Latour:** Ms. Latour mentions that funding instruments are not the only means to that end and concluded that market instruments also have a role to play. An example was given from the early 2000's with a debate on whether to focus support on 'research' or 'market'. According to Ms. Latour both are needed and market support also allowed photovoltaics to develop. In conclusion, R&I funding alone is important but not sufficient to achieve the targets. Adequate market instruments are necessary.

**Answer from Jens Bartholmes:** He mentions the recovery funding is not strictly R&I, but would cover the deployment and roll-out of R&I results.

**Answer from Fernando Morales Rojo:** He added that funding will help to introduce technologies in production to reduce embedded carbon. These instruments would be essential to foster new technologies and will help to minimise carbon leakage, however, they seem not to suffice to achieve the 55% target. Market development would be needed and for storage, the risk should be minimised which investors perceive in immature markets.

**Question from audience:** *Are these instruments really doing enough to support the market roll-out of new technologies when compared to other world regions which take a bolder approach?*

**Answer from Thomas Messervey:** He mentions that the industry driven funding in America, which seems to be changing and being more oriented toward European practices. This approach has good and bad points. When it comes to accessing finance, the simplest answer would be to start with submitting applications and to committing to have someone in the company dedicated to this. The importance of having a CFO to look at private funding was mentioned in the previous session. It was emphasized that inventors would like to have contact with someone with a financial backbone. In case an organisation is looking for public funding it should create the capacity in its organisation. Building capacity would be a first step to understand the funding schemes and where ideas fit into them.

**Answer from Marie Latour:** Ms. Latour mentions the EIC Accelerator Instrument as an attempt from the Commission to find solutions to a funding gap where less start-ups exists

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than in the US and which become unicorns in Europe. These measures should be acknowledged as the Commission is trying to find innovative ways to fund start-up's and allowing them to go up to the final stage in market development.

In 2020, ZABALA co-founded a European Association of consultancy in innovation with other consultancy firms. The purpose is to help companies that do not have the knowledge or capacity to follow all the different instruments to build the expertise that is needed. In some regions, support schemes exist to fund this consultancy support.

**Question from audience to Jens Bartholmes:** *Have there been any simplifications made to the application procedure for Horizon Europe?*

**Answer from Jens Bartholmes:** He explains that some simplifications have been introduced and less pages are required. The application process has been made more efficient, but still a lot is asked since applications rely on excellence and are very competitive. It is recommended to look at other funding schemes in addition since many good projects cannot be funded as there is not enough funding available for all.

**Question from moderator:** *From what we have seen so far of the Recovery Plans, what is your perspective on what is reserved for clean energy technologies?*

**Answer from Fernando Morales Rojo:** He explains that in Spain funds are available, but it is difficult to understand this for other Member States. In this regard it is not clear whether these funds have the same format as the Innovation Fund for example or a different one. He sees it as encouraging that the recovery funds could help to implement the Energy Package. He added, that not every Member State is asking for debt instruments in the first call, nevertheless, they could have a big impact on storage and on helping to bridge the gap between the business case and to start deployment

**Answer from Marie Latour:** Amends that the numbers mentioned during her presentation with €84 billion are only for those countries which already have indicated some amounts. In reality the number is larger and will cover only 4 years. In this regards Marie Latour notices that it will be a challenge for Member States to launch and evaluate all the projects and sometimes even have sufficient projects. She hopes Member States will use existing instruments as a way to attract projects and not set up too many new rules.

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## Closing Remarks

*Ingrid Weiss, Managing Director Projects, Head of Unit Smart Cities, WIP Renewable Energies*

This conference gave a good opportunity to take an inside look at how to achieve funding, how to invest in technologies and narrow the risk of the clean technologies. The third session on private funding was very interesting as it showcased different kinds of investors for different technologies, small scale projects as well as large scale projects.

- It is important that we have a roadmap for clean energy technologies and their integration in the market, as it matters to investors.
- We need to have CO2 pricing as it helps clean technology to become more competitive against other technologies.
- European State aid guidelines will be important for supporting start-ups.
- Companies should have a good team to run their project, as it can be an important criterion for investors.
- We should remember to look at regional and national funding schemes as well as EU funds.
- Collaborative projects give great input and opportunities for start-ups and SMEs. It allows you to learn from your colleagues and competitors.
- Guidelines on proposal preparation with support and advice from funding organisations would help small companies in producing successful applications.
- Financing projects through crowdfunding offers new opportunities for public society and companies. This also helps attain acceptance of new solutions by society which is key to reaching the 55% target emissions reduction.

Ingrid Weiss thanked the speakers, the panellists, the attendees and participants of this conference. Thank you to the organisers of the conference: EASE, the colleagues from ZABALA and all the SMARTSPEND partners.