



EYEN
YOUTH ENERGY



YES - Europe
Young leaders in
Energy and
Sustainability

GREEN JOBS FOR YOUTH ADVOCACY ROADMAP

COP30 PROJECT

OUR VOLUNTEER NETWORKS

This year, YES-Europe and the European Youth Energy Network (EYEN) are joining forces to amplify the voices of young leaders in the energy sector and share policy recommendations for a Just Transition, one that puts [GREEN JOBS FOR YOUTH](#) at the heart of Europe's future.

[YES-Europe](#) (Young leaders in Energy and Sustainability) is the European network of young professionals in the energy sector. YES develops connections, shares knowledge, and takes action on energy and sustainability topics by guiding stakeholders with a focus on the energy sector. YES-Europe is an accredited observer-NGO to the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), engaging in processes to advocate for youth inclusivity and ambitious policies to tackle the climate crisis and a member of the European Youth Energy Network (EYEN).

The [European Youth Energy Network](#) (EYEN) is the think tank placing youth at the centre of the European energy transition. EYEN builds intergenerational trust by equipping youth with the necessary knowledge and skills and by creating spaces for them to take action. EYEN unites 28 youth energy-focused member organisations, which unites a network of over 2000 young professionals and students in more than 15 countries. EYEN cooperates with international organisations, institutions, and companies to support and execute youth projects in the energy transition.

***Disclaimer:** this document has not made use of generative artificial intelligence. This roadmap is the result of research carried out by young professionals whose profiles and backgrounds are detailed in the 'Our people' section of this document; their respective contributions are presented in the next paragraph. All the sources mobilised are referenced in-text, either in hyperlinks or footnotes.*

Contributions

[YES-Europe](#) Amaryllis Perotti (research plan, coordination, structure and initial writing phases, policy research and analysis, contact with youth and stakeholders, in-depth review and editing), Caterina Bittendorf, (research plan, policy research and analysis, in-depth review and editing); Martina Chiarini, Suvd-Erdene Otgonbaatar (policy research and analysis, in-depth iterative review processes, specific focus on political sciences and legal terms' edits) Maximilian Buchsteiner (initial research plan, contact with youth and stakeholders) Stefano Cisterino (policy research). [EYEN](#) Leonardo Cangelmi, Maryana Malyshevska, Marion Revest (research plan, policy research and analysis, contact with youth and stakeholders, in-depth review and editing) ; Mahir Ege Hepsen, Giang Ngoc Huong Vu, Ana Maria Lopes, Cassandra Muylaert, Georgiana Daria Sorescu (reading and/or final minor edits and/or minor suggestions).



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - OUR COP30 PROJECT

Our COP30 Advocacy Roadmap is addressed to COP30 Parties and negotiators, EU policymakers, national governments and stakeholders in the industrial and energy sectors. We specify to whom specific recommendations are addressed throughout the document. Our recommendations are aligned with the objectives of the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) and more specifically with the target of the [Paris Agreement](#) to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C with efforts to 1.5°C. The International Court of Justice has affirmed in its Advisory Opinion that states are legally obliged to pursue these objectives with adequate measures¹. At COP28, a key agreement was the [Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge](#) to triple global installed renewable energy capacity by 2030 and to double the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by the same year, which implies setting a suitable context to develop the necessary workforce. These ambitious targets translate into EU policies such as the [Pact for Skills](#) under the [European Skills Agenda](#). As outlined by the Commission, this package follows the [Net-Zero Industry Act](#), and [Green Deal Industrial Plan](#), along with the [REPowerEU plan](#). This also contributes to the EU target that by 2030, ‘at least 60% of all adults should participate in training every year’². Our youth networks push for these goals to be sustainable and inclusive. Our Advocacy Roadmap is the output of our dedicated COP30 project. We relied on participatory and co-designed processes with young members of [YES-Europe](#) and the [European Youth Energy Network](#) whose inputs were further enriched and validated with policy research and through the engagement of key energy sector representatives, demonstrating that our recommendations are relevant, and that best practices can easily be replicated by more actors. In November 2025, stakeholders will be meeting for the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30) in Belém, Brazil. This takes place under the UNFCCC, as a high-level annual meeting for global leaders to discuss and advance climate action and commit to reducing CO2 emissions with high-scale agreements. Hosting COP30 in Belém provides a suitable context to include Indigenous communities. Yet, the logistics constraints and related costs posed significant challenges, especially in terms of inclusion of lower budget organisations. In fact, numerous developing countries and volunteer associations warned that they could not attend due to the expensive costs associated with the logistics. This includes children, youth, women’s and Indigenous Peoples organisations alongside broader civil society. Accommodation costs rose more than expected, and several European governments raised concerns over this issue. On that line, youth associations, including YES-Europe and EYEN, rely on tight budgets and limited resources. This year, many of our volunteers will not be able to join COP30 in Brazil due to budget constraints, which limits youth participation and overall inclusion in policy processes. Using a co-designed participative method along with a bottom-up approach, we came about with policy recommendations. This way, we decided to overcome these difficulties and disseminate these recommendations although many of our volunteers cannot attend the COP30.

¹ Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change (Request for Advisory Opinion), Advisory Opinion, International Court of Justice, Case No. 187, 23 July 2025. [PDF ICJ](#) ; [ICJ 23 July Press release](#).

² European Commission. ‘*Pact for Skills: Launch of large-scale renewable energy skills partnership.*’ Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 21 Mar. 2023. European Commission ; [Link](#).

OUR POLICY FOCUS

This past year, YES-Europe and EYEN conducted extensive research on the most pressing debates concerning the energy transition, youth, and competitiveness at the EU level. Our research suggests that these topics converge on the issue of employment for young people. For context, today, young people are more likely to face lower income growth compared to previous generations³, and to feel uncertain about their future perspectives⁴. Moreover, studies suggest that jobs in traditionally polluting ('brown') industries often provide better overall job conditions compared to many emerging green jobs⁵, and that the gender pay gap remains more evident than ever in the energy sector⁶. Recognising these phenomena is essential to ensure that favourable labour and social standards are transferred from brown sectors into the green sector, creating attractive and sustainable career opportunities for future generations. This, in turn, increases the availability of the skilled workforce needed for the energy transition, which reinforces the continent's energy security, ensures autonomy, and strengthens competitiveness on a larger scale. We invited green sector stakeholders to assess their alignment with our recommendations and share their best practices to demonstrate the relevance and credibility of our proposals. YES-Europe and EYEN would like to thank [EDP](#) and [Sustainable Energy for All \(SEforALL\)](#) for accepting to be cited in this document. We also thank the other stakeholders who wished to remain anonymous, but who kindly participated in this [Advocacy Roadmap](#)⁷. On these bases, we suggest the existence of [FIVE POLICY PILLARS](#) on which we based our 10 policy recommendations to enable a Just Transition. For each pillar, we highlight what we consider [BEST PRACTICES](#) that are already put in place by some stakeholders, and upon which more stakeholders can draw.

PILLAR 1- Promoting a Just energy transition;

PILLAR 2- Ensuring the necessary skills;

PILLAR 3- Ensuring substantive youth inclusion;

PILLAR 4- Committing to gender-transformative outcomes;

PILLAR 5- Securing adequate funding.

³ European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). *Young people are worse off than older generations in today's labour market*. Published 23 October 2017; [Link](#)

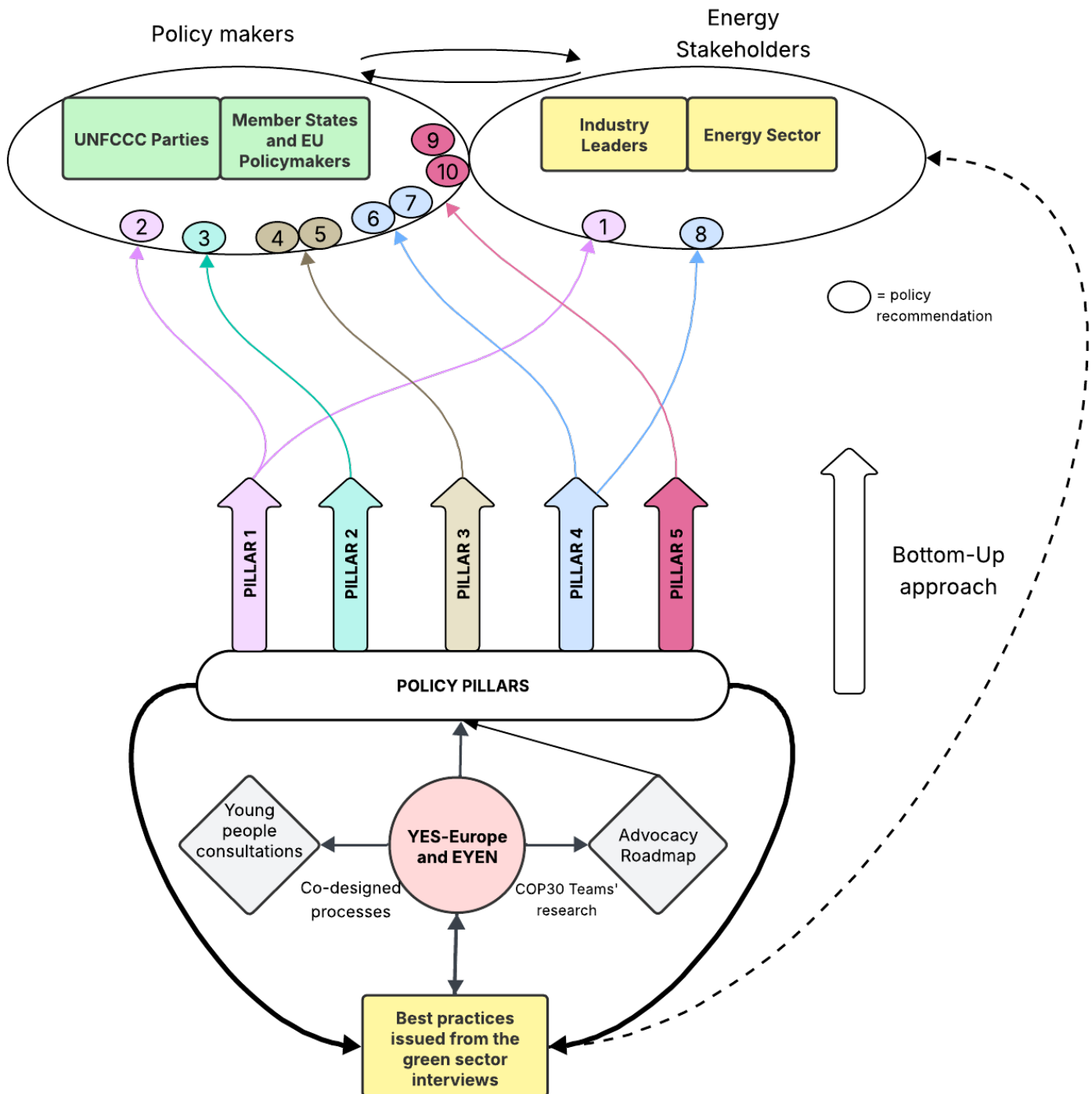
⁴ Rubin, J. D., Chen, K., & Tung, A. (2024). Generation Z's challenges to financial independence: adolescents' and early emerging adults' perspectives on their financial futures. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 07435584241256572

⁵ Galgóczi B. (2024) *Industrial policy for quality jobs and a Just Transition: plotting a route through the fiscal and geopolitical trap*, Policy Brief 2024.04, ETUI

⁶ [Florence School of Regulation](#): *Gender and Energy Explorer: Bridging the Gap for an Inclusive Energy Transition*.

⁷ YES-Europe and EYEN declare that no funding was received to conduct the COP30 activities, including this roadmap. The roadmap's research, dissemination and review processes solely relied on the dedicated work of our volunteers, whose profiles and backgrounds are presented in the "Our people" section of this document. The stakeholders cited in this roadmap have not funded our project nor any other activity of our networks. YES-Europe and EYEN, therefore, jointly declare no conflict of interest.

OUR BOTTOM-UP APPROACH



YES-EUROPE - OUR PEOPLE



YES-Europe COP30 Project Leads are [Amaryllis Perotti](#) and [Caterina Bittendorf](#). **Amaryllis** is Junior Energy Expert (Energy and Consumers) at the Institute for European Energy and Climate Policy (IEECP) of Amsterdam. Her work focuses on energy poverty and ETS2 impacts with expertise in quantitative social sciences. As a former [European Youth Forum delegate](#), she further developed her international skills in advocacy through a bilateral government-funded project which involved developing [policy recommendations](#) with Beninese youth advocates in Cotonou, Bénin. **Caterina** is climate advocate and business consultant, active in YOUNGO, Fridays for Future, and global youth forums. In 2024, Caterina was nominated UNFPA Youth Delegate for Sweden to the ICPD30 GYD and Youth Delegate of the Council of Europe. She is a specialist of gender inequality, and of frameworks on the Just Transition. This year, [Caterina is Germany's Youth Delegate to the UNFCCC](#), thereby engaging in high-level climate discussions through her YOUNGO position.

Caterina (left) and Amaryllis (right) in Bonn, Germany, at the UNFCCC SB62 meeting, in June 2025.
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Ana Maria Lopes is a Research Officer in the COP30 Task Force of EYEN. She holds a Master's Degree in Renewable Energy Engineering, where she wrote her thesis on policy coherence for sustainable development in Laos. After her studies, she worked in sustainability and energy consultancy. Currently, she is pursuing a Master's Degree in International Development and Public Policy, aiming to build a career in sustainable development by bridging technical expertise with policy. (anamaria.lopes@youthenergy.eu)

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OUR GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY PILLAR 1: PROMOTE A JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

The concept of a Just Transition, first introduced by labour movements in the 1970s, has evolved into a comprehensive framework to ensure that no one is left behind in the shift to low-carbon, climate-resilient, and sustainable economies in a fair and inclusive manner. The [ILO's Guidelines for a Just Transition](#) (2015) emphasise that a Just Transition encompasses protecting workers' rights, promoting decent work, ensuring social protection, and fostering social dialogue. Today, Just Transition literature also focuses on the rights and livelihoods of all affected communities, thereby integrating distributive, substantive and procedural justice into climate and development policies⁸. Central to this approach is the call for a fundamental shift away from extractive, environmentally damaging economic models, while addressing environmental and social impacts of the switch to renewable energy sources. At COP30, a [Just Transition Work Programme \(JTWP\)](#) decision is highly anticipated. Demanding ambitious mechanisms that leave no one behind is one of the main focus areas of the constituencies and civil society on the road to COP30. In this continuity, the European Commission acknowledged the importance of a Just Transition approach and has promoted it through several policy packages such as the [European Green Deal](#), the [Just Transition Mechanism](#), and the [European Climate Law](#). EU transition goals are embedded in the innovation and social goals of the European Commission. In fact, back in 2000, the [Lisbon European Council](#) established the strategy for the European Union to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010, with sustainable economic growth, more and better jobs, and greater social cohesion. In recent years, numerous research projects supported by [Horizon Europe](#) and [LIFE Programme](#) built upon the Council's objectives with a focus on Europe's most vulnerable regions, in particular regarding how the switch to renewables affects local markets and accelerate youth outmigration in coal regions⁹. Our policy research suggests that promoting a just energy transition necessitates commitments from industry leaders. The transition is an occasion for stakeholders to bring about successful employment initiatives and to promote fair opportunities for all. Employment schemes for youth, however, must be of high quality; salaries and overall working conditions must be optimal to ensure jobs' attractiveness, especially in vulnerable areas like historical coal regions which are impacted by the switch to renewables. In such contexts, industries should for instance offer reskilling programmes for ex-mine/Coal-Fired Power Plant (CFPP) workers, so that mine closures would not imply workers losing their jobs. In this continuity, we ask stakeholders to shed light to 'informal' workers in and around coal mines (for instance, people who operate vendors, but also (unpaid) care roles, etc.), who remain invisible and whose challenges are overlooked in many situations. Furthermore, at the core of the discussion lies the topic of wages. While some [national-level papers](#) acknowledge that the energy sector generally offers higher wages than others, several studies of reference suggest that we must remain cautious by promoting good jobs (which we define as a combination of decent wages,

⁸ Committee for Development Policy (2023), [Just Transition](#).

⁹ [JUSTEM](#) - Final Publishable Report. (April 2025). *Justice in Transition: Empowering citizens for a fair green economy*.

safe working conditions, and social protection guaranteed not only for highly educated profiles, but also for those with fewer formal qualifications) for all types of workers. In fact, workers with lower levels of education are often left behind; for instance, until the mid 1970s, in the UK, young men entering the workforce could expect [higher wages than their predecessors](#), which, however, only became the case for educated men after this period. This way, our research suggests that [such employment inequalities keep manifesting](#) due to different factors, including lower supply and demand of lower educated workers in some sectors. However, in the energy sector, workers of all levels of education remain a pillar to ensure the necessary skills of the Just Transition; both industrial and energy stakeholders consider that all categories of workers are central for a greener economy.

Policy recommendation 1 We recommend energy sector stakeholders to prioritise green youth employment schemes in regions where brown industries are downsizing. Transition plans should aim to replicate the high labour standards of brown sectors in emerging green sectors. If brown jobs remain more attractive than green jobs,¹⁰ research suggests that bottom-up support for the transition can be negatively impacted. Youth employment in vulnerable regions is key for regional autonomy, as economically strong regions strengthen the overall competitiveness of the European Union. We suggest that regional autonomy goes hand in hand with suitable work opportunities, to counter youth outmigration for instance. On this line, industries should invest in reskilling and upskilling programmes for former coal mine and coal-fired power plant workers, ensuring that they are not displaced by mine closures. Policies must also recognise the contribution of informal workers around coal economies, who are often excluded from official transition frameworks. On our definition of a "[good job](#)": Decent wages, safe working conditions, and social protection. This must be guaranteed not only for highly educated workers, but also for those with fewer formal qualifications.

Policy recommendation 2 We recommend Member States to include binding youth employment quotas for all transition-affected regions in their [2040 Nationally Determined Contributions submissions](#) (NDC) due by 2030. In fact, the [EU's 2040 target](#) will affect the workforce. Yet, the [Just Transition Fund](#) and [Social Climate Fund](#) lack youth-specific allocations, which we deplore.

What we consider best practices for the green sector

- Allocating a defined yearly budget to socially responsible initiatives that support the energy transition, with clear criteria to identify these initiatives ;
- Working with trade unions to identify the gaps in terms of labour standards to push, sustain, and shift paradigms in the post-transition economy ;

¹⁰ Galgóczi B. (2024) *Industrial policy for quality jobs and a Just Transition: plotting a route through the fiscal and geopolitical trap*, Policy Brief 2024.04, ETUI

- Reducing the duration of internships and ensuring closest gap possible between interns' wages and other workers';
- Investing in reskilling and upskilling programmes for formal and informal workers of closing energy or industrial sites;
- Adapting wages to inflation and increasing wages regularly, especially for employees with lower levels of education.

POLICY PILLAR 2: ENSURE THE NECESSARY SKILLS

In the continuity of our first policy pillar, we ask policymakers to ensure that people receive adequate training to contribute to the transition at all levels, from the so-called innovative fields (such as AI, and data analytics) to the practical ones (electrician, installer, operator). This effort should support both youth entering their first jobs and experienced workers transitioning from brown to green sectors. The challenge is significant, as Europe faces skills shortages for renewable energy¹¹ and educational systems remain relatively misaligned with transition needs¹². Moreover, the [NDC targets](#) are time-pressuring. This way, [the Council recently approved a statement of intent](#) in view of the delayed submission of an EU NDC to the UNFCCC. This statement, which is, however, not the EU's NDC, indicates the EU's intention to submit its post-2030 NDC ahead of COP30, in line with the [Paris Agreement](#). Nevertheless, this means the EU will miss the important window to be included into the NDC synthesis report, which will not feature NDCs submitted after September 2025 nor be updated. This is not only very unfortunate, but also paints a dark picture of those having caused the crisis, and having all resources, financial means and technology available to them, being unable to submit their NDC in time. A letter of intent is not sufficient. In this continuity, COP30's outcomes must establish binding skills development targets aligned with NDC commitments through green skills cooperation. The [Paris Agreement](#) cannot succeed without skilled workforces to maintain renewable energy infrastructure in Europe but also globally. On this basis, the [Florence School of Regulation](#) highlighted that globally, the energy sector added nearly 2.5 million jobs in 2023, bringing total employment to over 67 million workers. Energy employment increased by 3.8%, outpacing the economy-wide average of 2.2%. Green jobs, therefore, are in the making. Ensuring the necessary skills, however, leads to questions in the energy sector; [how can we ensure these skills are identified, and that they lead to sustainable outcomes while reaching competitiveness goals and the highest labour standards?](#) Green sector leaders answered these questions, by explaining how training is embedded in their labour standards targets, thereby giving insights in how such approaches can be scaled-up.

¹¹ Kuokkanen, A. (2023). *Skills for the energy transition in the changing labour market* (Science for Policy brief, JRC135382). European Commission, Joint Research Centre. Publications Office of the European Union.

¹² Cook, T., and Elliott, D. (2025). *Green skills gap: A way ahead*. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 10, Article 1577037.

Policy recommendation 3 We recommend that COP30 outcomes establish a Global Green Skills Partnership, drawing upon the [World Economic Forum's four-step plan to close the global green skills gap](#). This partnership would focus on knowledge exchange between developed and developing nations, with specific provisions and Means of Implementation for youth-led skills development programmes and international apprenticeship exchanges in renewable energy sectors.

What we consider best practices for the green sector

- Banning unpaid internships while retraining, onboarding, and defining efficient development programmes to ensure entry-level workers are equipped for the energy transition but also the digital transformation;
- Providing role-specific training across all levels, from digital skills and AI to technical training for installers and operators;
- Promoting lifelong learning and partner with research institutions and startups to stay ahead of innovation;
- Offering apprenticeships and early-career programmes tailored to the energy transition;
- Contributing to green skills/jobs upskilling and reskilling projects that aim to prepare the workforce for emerging energy sector roles.

POLICY PILLAR 3: ENSURE SUBSTANTIVE YOUTH INCLUSION

The Just Transition involves implementing pathways to ensure procedural and substantive justice are enabled. Procedural justice suggests that fair processes for making decisions are as important as the final outcome. In policymaking, this implies that people and especially the concerned groups, can have a voice in the decisions that affect them, and see these decisions as being neutral and unbiased, which in these settings implies that young people in all their diversities have a voice at the table, and processes are fair as well as transparent¹³. We consider that procedural justice and substantive justice must go hand in hand in this regard. Substantive justice prescribes how 'regulations, rules and procedures themselves are fair and legitimate'¹⁴ which, in these settings implies that on the one hand, youth benefits from having a seat at the table, while on the other hand this presence translates in concrete outcomes such as access to jobs, skills, along with social protections. Procedural and substantive justice guarantee that the fundamental rights of all social groups are respected, and that all social interests are taken into account during the decision-making process while promoting trust among the different segments

¹³ Solum, L. B. (2004). Procedural Justice. *S. Cal. L. rev.*, 78, 181

¹⁴ Dekker, S. W., & Breakey, H. (2016). 'Just culture:'Improving safety by achieving substantive, procedural and restorative justice. *Safety science*, 85, 188.

of society¹⁵. As all discussions will impact the young people of today, scholars, activists and policymakers emphasised in recent years that youth inclusion in key sectors such as the green energy one remains central to enable procedural and substantive justice. This way, and as highlighted by earlier political scientists¹⁶, we consider that supranational institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union hold power to enable clear inclusion targets to include procedural and substantive justice in policymaking pathways. Our research suggests that social standards and quotas should be deeply embedded into public procurement to ensure that all stakeholders take the necessary steps towards a fairer future, to ensure that social standards set by democratic institutions are reflected in the private sector. On this line, the 2014 revision of the European Procurement Directives represented a milestone, as it shifted from ‘purchasing at the lowest price’ toward ‘integrating social considerations, such as fair labour standards, into public contracts’. In 2024, the European Commission launched a call to gather evidence, information, data and feedback on how these procurement directives (Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU) have performed. This gave stakeholders a chance to assess both the achievements and upcoming challenges. On this line, ETUI notes in a recent report that uncertainties remain regarding the reinforcement of these directives, notably due to competition law, fiscal pressures and budget constraints along with debt reduction goals¹⁷.

All of the stakeholders we met support our recommendation to embed precise social goals into public procurement contracts; yet, debates remain regarding the most suitable approach. Notably, EDP highlighted that 12% of their workers were Gen Z, which connects to the percentage target we suggested above. EDP considers that including social and labour conditionalities in public funding and procurement helps to formalise youth inclusion practices across industries. This way, setting clear youth hiring quotas can be an effective policy tool to promote fair representation. Yet, one of the stakeholders wished to remain anonymous suggested that youth hiring quotas cannot be the only solution since companies actively seek (and will continue to seek in the future) young skilled workers, due to the shortage in workforce, as discussed in our previous sections. Therefore, aligned with our policy recommendations, stakeholders suggest a blinded approach; hiring quotas can be useful and bring about interesting social conditionalities in public procurement strategies, however, they must above all be accompanied by suitable early career pathways, which energy sector stakeholders can actively build to include workers and more specifically young workers in the energy transition. In other words, we ask stakeholders of the industrial and energy sector to pledge to provide suitable trainings for all young workers in all the fields necessary to enable a just transition.

¹⁵ Wu, Z. (2024). *Procedural Justice*. In: *Why is Social Justice Possible?*. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-5380-2_8

¹⁶ Denord, F., & Schwartz, A. (2009). *L'Europe sociale n'aura pas lieu*. Raisons d'agir.

¹⁷ Niklas Bruun. (2025, June 18). *Promoting collective bargaining in public procurement*. In ETUI, The European Trade Union Institute. Retrieved 11:47, October 01, 2025, from <https://www.etui.org/publications/promoting-collective-bargaining-public-procurement-0>

Policy recommendation 4 We ask parties and EU policymakers to include social and labour conditionalities in all public subsidies and procurement. These should include the ban of unpaid internships, guarantee decent wages and working conditions, access to social protection along with objectives in terms of youth hiring quotas such as having for instance at least 15% of entry-level workers of which a certain percentage is female or non-binary - exact percentages to be decided through democratic processes that involve the concerned groups.

Policy recommendation 5 We recommend parties and EU policymakers to ensure meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes at all levels of energy transition governance, from local project planning to national policy development and international climate negotiations. Young people must have structured representation in transition committees, energy planning bodies, and policy advisory groups, with dedicated seats and voting rights, not merely consultative roles. Participation must also translate into tangible outcomes, with clear pathways for skills development, training, and career progression so that youth benefit directly from the decisions that shape the transition.

What we consider best practices for the green sector

- Ensuring that internal policies reflect the demand of the trade unions in terms of labour standards, representation quotas and social goals;
- Supporting the adaptation of procurement policies and answering the upcoming call for evidence of the Commission to explain the benefits of youth hiring quotas, along with hiring quotas of underrepresented groups.

POLICY PILLAR 4: COMMIT TO GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE OUTCOMES

In line with the development of the new [Gender Action Plan](#), we call on parties to ensure that the negotiation outcomes of all tracks deliver gender-transformative policies. In the UNFCCC agreements, these objectives fall under the umbrella of [sexual and reproductive health and rights \(SRHR\)](#), next to [gender-based violence \(GBV\)](#), [harmful practices \(HP\)](#) and unpaid care work¹⁸, to ensure fundamental human dignity, health and equity, which is directly linked to the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). Gender is a key lens through which climate impacts and responses must be understood and particularly by our industries and our energy sector¹⁹. Girls and women along with other gender minorities often are the most impacted by climate change, both through disproportionate exposure to climate-related risks and through barriers to participation in decision-making and green economic opportunities. Bridging these levels means ensuring that global commitments translate into concrete measures that directly empower those

¹⁸ Ferrant, G., Pesando, L. M., & Nowacka, K. (2014). Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes. *Boulogne Billancourt: OECD Development Center*, 20, 1-12

¹⁹ Foster, V., & Bedrosyan, D. (2014). *Understanding CO2 emissions from the global energy sector*.

most affected. Gender-transformative approaches are intersectional and cross-cutting; they encompass women, girls, gender-diverse people, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalised groups affected by intersecting factors such as race, age, class, disability, or migration status. These approaches aim to tackle the social norms, power relations, and institutional practices that not only create but sustain inequality. This ensures equal access to resources, decision-making, and opportunities throughout the transition process.

In this way, climate action becomes not only environmentally sustainable but also socially just. Moreover, research suggests that while more green jobs are being created, not all social groups are equally represented. Women for instance make up 39% of the global workforce ([ILO](#)). However, women account for only 20% of the workforce in the energy sector ([IEA](#)). The [Florence School of Regulation](#) highlights that the gender gap in energy is nearly **twice as large** as in the economy overall, showing a major gender equality and inclusion challenge. Consequently, our research bridges climate changes with equity principles and gender transformative outcomes. This leads to policy recommendations which industrial and energy sector leaders can implement, especially in regard to young women in the workplace. **In practice, in the workplace context, gender transformative outcomes cover equal parental leave, and valorising house labour and activism within the job experience.** These measures come along with ensuring gender equality including (but not limited to) equal pay. Our youth networks identify a continuity between macro-level gender transformative outcomes as outlined in the [UNFCCC Gender Action Plan](#) and workplace gender transformative policies. Gender inequality is rooted in complex social constructs, where girls, women in all their diversities and other gender minorities were unable to access the public sphere, and therefore, were economically deprived throughout history²⁰. In addition, many studies suggest that nowadays in Europe, when it comes to work, the motherhood pay gap remains²¹. **Thus, the core of our policy recommendations lies in the importance of promoting and enabling concrete opportunities for women and especially young women.** Again, our goal is for them to access quality green jobs and for them to thrive in the workplace, since, as defended by women rights activist Malala Yousafzai, society can only create their opportunities to the extent of its women's ability to do so. **We believe that industry leaders in Europe have a role to play by committing to these gender transformative outcomes in the workplace.**

Policy recommendation 6 We request Parties, EU policymakers, industries, and energy stakeholders to acknowledge that the climate crisis disproportionately affects women, girls, and gender-diverse people, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalised communities facing intersecting inequalities through race, class, disability, age and migration status. Negotiation outcomes must reflect gender-transformative, intersectional, and inclusive approaches that go beyond binary gender categories to reflect this diversity and specific vulnerabilities. This

²⁰ Mellor, M. (1997). Women, nature and the social construction of 'economic man'. *Ecological Economics*, 20(2), 129-140

²¹ Grimshaw, D., & Rubery, J. (2015). *The motherhood pay gap: A review of the issues, theory and international evidence*.

must go under [SBI18](#) and beyond, which must be translated into relevant policy packages at the EU and national levels.

Policy recommendation 7 Parties and EU policymakers must guarantee the equal and meaningful participation of women, girls, gender-diverse individuals, Indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups in policy making through capacity building, binding quotas and support mechanisms. Drawing on the new [Gender Action Plan \(GAP\)](#), policies must be ambitious, elevate feminist and gender-transformative strategies, but above all provide knowledge sharing and resources to ensure a successful implementation.

Policy recommendation 8 We ask industries, and energy stakeholders to promote equal parental leave for their workforce. Also, we ask them to emphasise the right to regulated and flexible working hours which includes allowing part-time jobs. This involves easing access to these part-time schedules while limiting the economic impact of the switch to part-time. We also urge them to valorise house labour and activism within the job experience, especially for jobs in the green sector. This concrete policy recommendation ensures that women and especially young women will not be left behind in the transition, and that green economic opportunities will be accessible to them. Our research suggests that gendered green skills and pay gaps could be shaped in the coming years if the industrial and energy sectors do not take meaningful commitments.

What we consider best practices for the green sector

- Formalising the recognition of unpaid care work and activism as valid experience throughout recruitment processes, especially for entry-level workers;
- Creating an internal Gender Equality Plan to be reviewed annually, to provide and disseminate measures addressing leadership representation, pay equity, parental protection, unconscious bias training, and mental health support.

POLICY PILLAR 5: SECURE ADEQUATE FUNDING

The historical responsibility of countries for climate change has been a subject of debate for over two decades and will likely remain a central issue in future international climate discussions and negotiations²². This way, many reports and papers recommend preparing the provision of financial resources based on historic contributions and the [Polluter Pays Principle \(PPP\)](#), to ensure a Just implementation of climate policies. The PPP is central to [EU environmental policy](#): those who cause pollution must cover the costs of preventing, controlling, and repairing damage, as well as its impacts on health, nature, and the economy. Many legal

²² Skeie, R. B., Peters, G. P., Fuglestad, J., & Andrew, R. (2021). A future perspective of historical contributions to climate change. *Climatic Change*, 164(1), 24

philosophers found the PPP neither ‘unfair neither unreasonable’²³ and consider it a core pillar of corrective justice, thereby considering that the PPP is likely to remain central in shaping climate policies. In this context, ‘corrective justice is the principle that those who are responsible for the wrongful losses of others have a duty to repair them’²⁴ under the Loss & Damage frameworks, and beyond. In this continuity, many EU environmental policies aim at ensuring that polluters pay the price of their pollution by developing carbon markets such as the [EU Emissions Trading System \(EU ETS\)](#) which aims at ensuring polluters pay for their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. With the new implementation of [ETS2](#) (European Union's second Emissions Trading System, a cap-and-trade system, which will become fully operational in 2027), the EU developed the [Social Climate Fund](#) to mitigate ETS2 impacts on vulnerable groups. However, while youth is often represented in consultation and is often considered a vulnerable group, **zero euros are specifically allocated for youth green job creation**. This represents a concrete policy failure given that 2040 [NDC](#) submissions (due 2028) must demonstrate how countries will manage workforce transitions affecting 40% of EU workers. Current climate finance levels, therefore, require substantial increases to meet transition needs, while European green investment still demands massive scaling of existing mechanisms²⁵. **The energy sector remains at the center of financial flows corrective justice pathways**, as historically, resources were to a large extent gathered from Africa and Asia to benefit the economic development of the Global North²⁶; ^{27,28}, while local populations in so-called developing countries did not benefit from their territorial resources. The energy sector, therefore, must commit to enabling the PPP Principle with concrete commitments and abstain from creating and/or enhancing neocolonial structures.

Policy recommendation 9 We urge COP30 Parties to pay up to their responsibility as outlined in the [1997 Kyoto Protocol](#) and the [2015 Paris Agreement](#). We ask them to implement the Polluter Pays Principle (PPP) in all climate finance mechanisms, ensuring that emitters contribute proportionally to the costs of mitigation, adaptation, and workforce transition. This includes scaling up predictable, grant-based finance for the [Least Developed Countries \(LDCs\)](#), especially [Small Islands Developing States \(SIDS\)](#), with transparent mechanisms to repair climate-induced losses and damages may they be economic or non-economic.

Policy recommendation 10 We urge EU Member States that design Social Climate Plans to continue consultations with youth organisations (as recognised by the EU) and allocate dedicated funding for youth, including reskilling programmes and quality green job creation. The Social Climate Fund must move beyond consultation to guarantee binding budget lines

²³ Tan, K. C. (2023). Climate reparations: Why the polluter pays principle is neither unfair nor unreasonable. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 14(4), e827

²⁴ Coleman, J. L. (1995). The practice of corrective Justice. *Ariz. L. Rev.*, 37, 15

²⁵ Andersson, M., Köhler-Ulrich, P., & Nerlich, C. (2025). *Green investment needs in the EU and their funding*. *ECB Economic Bulletin*, Issue 1. European Central Bank. https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/economic-bulletin/articles/2025/html/ecb.ebart202501_03-90ade39a4a.en.html

²⁶ Global North in this context refers to [Annex I countries](#) based on the Kyoto Protocol.

²⁷ Barbier, E. (2019). *Natural resources and economic development*. Cambridge University Press

²⁸ Raffer, K., & Singer, H. W. (2001). The economic north-south divide: Six decades of unequal development. In *The Economic North-South Divide*. Edward Elgar Publishing

for youth employment schemes, targeted support for vulnerable workers, and concrete pathways to integrate youth into the green economy.

What we consider best practices for the green sector

- Providing transparency in companies' investments, also when it comes to financial products.
- Dedicating substantial funds to equip youth with skills needed for green jobs, especially in economically disadvantaged regions, including but not limited to developing countries.

WHAT STAKEHOLDERS HAVE TO SAY

“For EDP, it is essential that the transition creates meaningful economic opportunities and improves quality of life, especially for vulnerable communities and employees impacted by structural changes such as the closure of thermal power plants. We commit to empowering the next generations through investments in education, reskilling, and social projects. Each year, EDP allocates over €30 million to social responsibility.”



“SEforALL recognises that achieving a just and equitable energy transition requires stronger international political will and sustained economic commitments. A critical priority is the mobilization of significantly greater capital—particularly for low- and middle-income countries, alongside the scaling of proven technical solutions, evidence-based planning, coordination and policies. Equally important is strengthening the capacity of governments and developing a skilled workforce to confront the interconnected challenges of energy access, climate action, and sustainable development.”

“EDP views gender equality as fundamental to organisational success and societal progress. Our [Gender Equality Plan](#), reviewed annually, encompasses over 30 concrete measures addressing leadership representation, pay equity, parental protection, unconscious bias training, and mental health support. We advocate for equal parental leave across all genders and believe that recognising unpaid work, such as caregiving or activism, as valuable experience can contribute to more inclusive hiring and promotion practices, especially in sectors like green energy, where diverse perspectives are critical. [We support](#) young parents through flexible working arrangements, extended parental leaves, childcare support, and family health benefits, creating an environment where employees can balance career and family life effectively. We, EDP, acknowledge the significant challenge of [ensuring equal access to opportunities for underrepresented groups](#), including youth, women, and minority communities, and tackling barriers that can limit their participation in the green economy. Driving alignment across global value chains to uphold decent work standards and ensure inclusivity requires deep collaboration with partners and suppliers, which can be complex but is essential for delivering a truly fair and inclusive transition.”

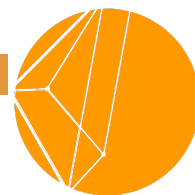


“SEforALL is committed to gender-transformative outcomes and has underscored the need for comparable parental leave and the recognition of housework within our work. We support parents through a comprehensive paid parental leave policy based on UN standards. The policy ensures that parents have the necessary time to bond with and care for their new child. IRENA reports that only 32% of roles in the renewable energy sector are held by women, with most segregated in non-technical and administrative roles. The World Economic Forum reports that there is a 19% wage gap between men and women within the energy sector. Further, as women progress in their careers, they tend to leave the energy sector, leading to lower representation and retention rates when compared to other segments of the workforce.”



YES-EUROPE AND EYEN CALL UPON PARTIES, EU POLICYMAKERS, INDUSTRIAL AND ENERGY SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS TO ENSURE THAT ALL CLIMATE ACTION AND ENERGY TRANSITION OUTCOMES ARE FIRMLY ROOTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER JUSTICE AND INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY.

WE ASK INDUSTRY AND ENERGY STAKEHOLDERS TO DRAW UPON THE BEST PRACTICES OF THE GREEN SECTOR HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS ADVOCACY ROADMAP.



YES - Europe
Young leaders in
Energy and
Sustainability