



Hybrid co-creation meeting on:

CO-CREATING KNOWLEDGE ON COAL+ REGIONS IN TRANSITION

**Towards an interdisciplinary understanding of territorial change
in the context of the clean energy transition**

June 16-17 2022, in Rome and On-line

Briefing note for co-creation

Why this meeting

In a globalised context, many European regions are exposed to the deep and sometimes painful transformation of their social, economic and cultural life. The clean energy transition, if not properly managed, may become an additional and decisive hurdle for those regions that are still heavily dependent on fossil-fuel-based industries or the extraction of fossil fuels themselves, i.e. coal and carbon-intensive regions. In this framework, the EU H2020 funded ENTRANCES project is investigating the challenges facing coal and carbon-intensive regions in transition hinging on the idea that the transition to clean energy should not be considered only as a technological change or an industrial shift but also a deep and pervasive social process that affects profoundly the identity of the impacted territories. To this end, the project is focused on developing a theoretically-based and empirically-grounded understanding of the territorial and transitional dynamics of 13 European coal and carbon-intensive regions, so as to formulate a set of recommendations to tackle these issues.

Starting in May 2020, ENTRANCES is now at a turning point. In the first year of activity (up to April 2021), the project has developed a Multidimensional Analytic Framework (MAF) devised to analyze different dimensions of change, i.e. socio-economic, socio-cultural, socio-psychological, socio-political, socio-ecological & technical, and gender as a cross-cutting dimension. In its second year (from April 2021 up to now), the research has applied such a framework for developing a set of 13 regional case studies, focused on describing the peculiarities of each case (*ideographic approach*). With the data collection almost completed and the case study reports underway, the project is now approaching the next step, consisting of a comparison between the analyzed cases, and regional modelling and scenario building. This effort is aimed at generalising knowledge on the class of cases analysed, i.e. the coal regions in transition (*nomothetic approach*).

The ENTRANCES co-creation meeting is intended to be a juncture between these two phases. In this respect, the co-creation meeting is configured as an evidence-based dialogue aimed at providing useful inputs for answering the following research questions:

- RQ1: What are the different territorial transitional trajectories embraced by European coal and carbon-intensive regions?

- RQ2: What variables are most influential in the appearance of the deterritorialisation process and what kinds of strategies are the key determinant of success in terms of re-territorialisation? (on de/re-territorialisation concepts see further on page two)

The dialogue will be open to researchers engaged in other research projects on coal and carbon-intensive regions in transition – among them are the ENTRANCES’ sister projects CINTRAN and TIPPING+ – as well as to other experts and scholars focusing their research on place-based transitions toward sustainability. In this regard, the empirical evidence collected within the ENTRANCES project will be integrated with that collected in the course of other projects and studies in similar fields.

In the context portrayed above, the aim of the co-creation meeting is threefold:

Firstly, the meeting is aimed at **sharing and discussing the interim results** obtained in the different case studies in ENTRANCES and beyond, to broaden the empirical knowledge of coal and carbon-intensive regions of all the participants in the meeting.

Secondly, it **aims to co-creating a set of queries, conjectures and remarks** to be used as input informing the research agenda. The outcomes of the meeting should have a direct application in the next phases of the ENTRANCES project, but, at least in the intention of the proponents, can inform to some extent the other research efforts that are ongoing in the same direction.

Finally, through a cross-fertilisation among different projects and different SSH disciplines, the meeting aims at contributing to a **better interdisciplinary understanding of territorial change** in the framework of the clean energy transition.

Conceptual coordinates for co-creation

A first step that was undertaken by the ENTRANCES project was the attempt to avoid a conflation of concepts as concerns the coal and carbon-intensive regions in transition. To this aim, a set of conceptual coordinates have been drawn from the project to provide a common baseline language for the co-creation meeting.

- *Coal and Carbon Territories (CCTs)*. These are the territories in which the “coal and carbon” features are represented as a distinctive part of the local identity or are a key asset for the income and employment opportunities of the local community. In the research, CCT has been interpreted as the territory more directly affected by the decarbonisation process. As such, the CCTs have been considered the “fulcrum” or the “core” of the ENTRANCES case studies. As the coal and carbon territories usually are not administrative regions – but socio-cultural ones – their needs, views and desires are often poorly represented and their voices risk being unheard.
- *The Clean Energy Transition (CET)*. ENTRANCES has studied the clean energy transition as a unit of analysis well distinguished by the Coal and Carbon Territory. In each regional case study, the clean energy transition has been observed in ENTRANCES at the level of the Political Administrative Region (encompassing the Coal and Carbon Territories) more closely associated with governing the energy transition. Even though it is true that a shift in the energy system is accompanied by processes of spatial restructuring, the clean energy transition should not be confused with the transition of the territory itself.
- *Territorial Transitional Trajectories (TTTs)*. These are typical types of territorial trajectories embraced by different Coal and Carbon Territories (CCTs) in the context of the Clean Energy Transition (CET). A TTT may be understood as a typical process of territorial change connected with the clean energy transition. In this regard, territories characterised by similar socio-ecological and socio-technical features are likely to be affected similarly by the climate transition, as such features are fitted to some specific type of development. The territories embracing similar TTT likely face similar challenges, while different sets of coping strategies may lead to differentiated outcomes in terms of de/re-territorialisation.

- *De/Re-territorialisation.* De-territorialisation has been defined in many different ways. In ENTRANCES it is defined as the process of progressive weakening of the ties and relations that constitute a territory, e.g. ties and relations among actors, and among them and the inhabited space. Conversely, re-territorialisation is the process of establishing new territorial ties and linkages that normally happens when a relative de-territorialisation process is ongoing.

Methodological coordinates for co-creation

The meeting will be informed by a co-creation methodology aimed at bringing to the surface the implicit knowledge of the participants and, through structured interaction, using it in a productive way, i.e. to produce new knowledge that can be exploited for research purposes.

In this regard, the usefulness of the input co-created is measured in terms of their capacity to take a step ahead in dealing with the two research questions. In this respect, it can be useful to highlight here the difference between the two questions. The first question (RQ1), is related to the attempt to differentiate and group cases into different territorial transitional trajectories. In this respect, the first research question deals with coal and carbon-intensive regions in transition in a rather static way. The second research question (RQ2), on the contrary, concerns the dynamics which can lead a territory towards de-territorialisation or re-territorialisation outcomes.

The co-creation methodology is articulated in **different moves**.

- *Move 1: Setting the co-creation scene.* This phase is aimed at synchronising the participants on the co-creation efforts, reminding which are the horizon of co-creation (i.e. the research landscape on coal and carbon-intensive regions), and the methodology and tools adopted.
- *Move 2: Sharing empirical knowledge.* In this phase, the research results on coal and carbon-intensive regions will be shared analysing one at a time different dimensions of change: socio-economic, socio-cultural, socio-psychological, socio-political and socio-ecological & technical. Each of these dimensions will be discussed in a dedicated “empirical panel”, while the gender dimension will be discussed in all of them as a crosscutting issue. Some of the cases will be presented in pre-established speeches, but all the participants will be asked to bring forward their case-related knowledge.
- *Move 3: Singling out Inputs to Research.* Elicited by the sharing of empirical evidence after each of the panel discussions the participants will be asked to single out *Inputs to Research* (IRs), i.e. **Queries, Conjectures or Remarks** (QCRs) about the two research questions and that can feed the next research phases. To help the participants to single out such *Inputs to Research*, a co-creation sheet will be distributed in both physical and digital formats. The participants will be asked to fill the sheets with their *Inputs to Research* and put them in a box to be opened in the final session of the seminar (see Move 4). Moves 2 and 3 will be iteratively repeated for each of the empirical panels, for a total of five times along the duration of the meeting.
- *Move 4: Presenting and discussing the Inputs to Research.* When all the five Empirical Panel will be held, the meeting will approach its last move in a final discussion. During the discussion, the two boxes (the physical one and the virtual one) will be opened and a short overview of the input collected will be presented. The participants will then present and discuss one at a time their *Inputs to Research*. If time will not allow presenting all the inputs, there will be anyhow a written track to follow.
- *Move 5: Reporting the co-creation results.* After the meeting, all the inputs-to-research will be gathered and a short report on the co-creation results will be made available for the participants.

The co-creation methodology will therefore produce a **set of Inputs to Research**. Each of such inputs can be framed in a 3 x 2 matrix, where the research questions are connected with queries, conjectures and

remarks co-created in the meeting. In the example below the Input to Research 01 (IR-01) refers to a query regarding the TTTs, while IR-05 concerns a conjecture about the variables leading to de/re-territorialisation.

Table 1: The matrix organising the knowledge co-created in the meeting

Research questions	Queries	Conjectures	Remarks
RQ1: What are the differentiated territorial transitional trajectories?	IR-01		
RQ2: What variables are most influential in the appearance of the de/re-territorialisation?		IR-05	

The inputs produced will be used in the next phase of the ENTRANCES research, i.e. for comparative analysis, modelling and scenario building, made available to the participants, and disseminated as an available input for other research activities.

The co-creation methodology foresees also a set of **rules of the game** that are necessary for ensuring broad participation and more meaningful, fair and productive interaction among the participants. All the planned speeches will not exceed 5 minutes, while the spontaneous talks of the participants should be kept to three minutes. Given the short overall duration of the meeting, this will allow multiple rounds of talk.

The methodology also foresees a **set of roles**: the *moderators*, who will take care of time and will guide the discussion towards the objectives of the different sessions; the *facilitators*, who will ensure continuity of the discussion between the participants in Rome and the participants online. Each of the empirical panels will also benefit from a discussant, who will warm up the discussion by reacting to the pre-established presentations.

Co-creation tools

A set of tools will support the co-creation work.

Firstly, the already mentioned **co-creation sheet** will facilitate the identification and description of the *inputs to research*, i.e. queries, conjectures and remarks. The co-creation sheets will be distributed before each empirical panel and then collected in the box.

Secondly, a **digital folder** will be set up to share not only the presentation but also key research papers or documents mentioned during the discussion. All the participants will be granted access to the folder both for uploading their documents and for accessing the documents shared by others

Finally, an additional tool of the co-creation will be the **informal moments** of the meeting, where the participants may share views and insights in a bilateral setting. It is worth noticing that, even within certain limits, also online participants can use informal interaction with other online participants (e.g. through the chat).

Articulation of the meeting

The co-creation meeting will be articulated into four sessions: an *introductory session*, dedicated to setting the scene for co-creation; a *first empirical session* dedicated to results about the Coal and Carbon Territories; a *second empirical session* dedicated to results about the Clean Energy Transition; a *final session* dedicated to discussing queries, conjectures and remarks collected during the meeting. The first two sessions will be held on the first day of the meeting (16 June 2022), while the second two sessions will be held on the second day of the meeting (17 June 2022).

- *Introductory Session* (14.00-14.50 – 16 June 2022). The session will be dedicated to creating an enabling environment for co-creation. Firstly, the session will welcome the participants to the meeting. Secondly, it will provide an overview of the landscape of the ongoing H2020 funded research projects on

coal and carbon-intensive regions in transition thus outlining the domain of applicability of the knowledge generated in the meeting (i.e. the Inputs for Research). Finally, it will brief on the co-creation mechanisms and focus the participants' attention on the gender dimension.

- *Empirical Session 1: the Coal and Carbon Territories - CCTs* (15.20-18.00 – 16 June 2022). This session will include three Empirical Panels, dedicated to the different dimensions through which ENTRANCES has described the current situation of the Coal and Carbon Territories: socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-psychological dimensions. The *socio-economic dimension*, describes the region in terms of structural change, by comparing three nested territorial levels: the coal and carbon territory, the labour market area and the political-administrative region. The *socio-cultural dimension* describes how different global cultural flows (e.g., flows of people, ideologies, money, media, technologies, and non-human elements) are producing stress-strains in the territorial organisation in terms of conflicts, tensions, and ambiguities, or blocks. The *socio-psychological dimension* looks at how citizens of the CCT are reacting to the transformations ongoing in the territory. The dimension looks at different cognitive and emotional dynamics – including place attachment, and decarbonisation-induced psychological impacts, but also individual resilience and the coping strategies adopted by citizens. In this session the project partners will present results about Central Germany and Silesia (socio-economic dimension); Sulcis and Port Talbot (Socio-cultural dimension); As Pontes, Stavanger and Jiu Valley (Socio-Psychological dimension).
- *Empirical Session 2: the Clean Energy Transition – CET* (09.00-10.40 – 17 June 2022). This session will include two Empirical Panels, dedicated to the different dimensions through which ENTRANCES has described the Clean Energy Transition ongoing in the regions: the socio-political and socio-technical dimensions. The *socio-political dimension* has analysed the narrative battles for the interpretation of the energy transition ongoing in coal and carbon-intensive regions. This allowed us to identify how local actors are aggregating around different “constituencies” for regulating, adapting, or opposing the energy transition. The *socio-ecological and technical dimension* assess the transformative capacity available in case study regions, intending to investigate how far a region is able to deviate from its current (carbon-intensive) path. In this session, the project partners will present results about Upper Styria, Brindisi and Rhineland (Socio-Political dimension) and Lusatia and Krakow (Socio-Ecological & Technical dimension).
- *Final Session* (11.10-13.00 – 17 June 2022). In this session, the *inputs for research* will be presented and discussed. The session – a long one – will allow different rounds of interaction and will be a way to deepen and sum up all the issues touched on in the previous sessions.



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