

Following the Money: Poland

What is the Just Transition Fund going to finance?



Photo: CEE Bankwatch Network

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This briefing provides an overview of the just transition envisioned in the Polish Territorial Just Transition Plans for the four regions designated to receive money from the Just Transition Fund: Upper Silesia (including the allocation for Western Małopolska), Lower Silesia (Wałbrzych), the Łódź region (Bełchatów) and Eastern Wielkopolska. It scrutinises and evaluates the economic, employment-related, environmental and social aspects of the plans, and shows how the investments are to be divided among the respective policies for each of these areas. Unlike our previous briefings, this time we not only focus on the content of the Territorial Just Transition Plans themselves, but also on how the objectives described in the plans specifically translate into the allocation of funds. In short, we follow the money.

This briefing consists of three sections. Following a brief introduction to the Just Transition Mechanism, the second section provides an overview of the methodology we applied to conduct this analysis. The third section identifies what Poland actually plans to fund to alleviate the impacts of the transition to carbon neutrality and looks at the allocation of the funds to specific types of projects.

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Introduction to the Just Transition Mechanism

The Just Transition Mechanism is a regional development programme announced by the European Commission in January 2020. Its purpose is to provide targeted support to regions in the EU that are likely to be disproportionately impacted by the transition to a carbon-neutral economy under the European Green Deal.

The mechanism rests on three separate pillars. The first is the Just Transition Fund, the second is a dedicated just transition scheme under the InvestEU programme, and the third is a new public sector loan facility financed with EU grants and loans from the European Investment Bank. The latter two are discussed in more detail in our recent briefing on the second and third pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism.¹ Overall, the targeted support provided by the Just Transition Mechanism has led to the mobilisation of around EUR 55 billion in private and public investments.²

To be eligible for funding under the pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism, EU Member States were required to negotiate Territorial Just Transition Plans for regions identified as likely to suffer negative socio-economic impacts from the transition to a carbon-neutral economy. This process lasted from the launch of the Just Transition Fund Regulation in June 2021 until the European Commission's approval of the plans, which had to be completed by 31 December 2022. Of the eight countries covered by CEE Bankwatch Network – Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia – seven had their Territorial Just Transition Plans approved in 2022.³ Bulgaria's plan was approved in December 2023.

Poland originally drafted Territorial Just Transition Plans for seven subregions: (1) Eastern Wielkopolska, (2) Upper Silesia, (3) Lublin Voivodeship (focusing on the Bogdanka mine), (4) Łódź Voivodeship (Bełchatów region), (5) Western Małopolska, (6) Zgorzelec, and (7) Wałbrzych (both in Lower Silesia). However, only five plans were formally submitted to the European Commission: Eastern Wielkopolska, Upper Silesia,⁴ Łódź (for Bełchatów), Lower Silesia (for Wałbrzych) and Western Małopolska. Lublin Voivodeship and the Zgorzelec region were excluded earlier in the process after concerns were raised during informal discussions with the European Commission over a lack of clarity on the transition plans for the two regions, particularly in relation to the low targets for reducing carbon dioxide by 2030 and the distant closing dates set for the mines in Bogdanka and Turów. The plan for Western Małopolska was later rejected because it failed to comply with the Just Transition Fund Regulation, largely due to its lack of detail on how the transition process would impact the region. However, it is set to receive some support from the Just Transition Fund due to the knock-on effects of the Upper Silesian transition process on workers living in an affected area of Małopolska. Thus, some aspects of the Western Małopolska plan were added to the Upper Silesian plan. As a result, the region has received a comparatively small allocation, primarily aimed at addressing the employment impacts of the coal phase-out.

The plan for Łódź (Bełchatów) was approved with a rendezvous clause in December 2022. Subsequently, an updated and more ambitious version of the document was submitted in January 2024. Although the revised

¹ CEE Bankwatch Network, [The Second and Third Pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism](#), CEE Bankwatch Network, 13 March 2023.

² European Commission, [The Just Transition Mechanism: making sure no one is left behind](#), European Commission, accessed 9 March 2023.

³ European Commission, [Just Transition Platform](#), European Commission, accessed 9 March 2023.

⁴ Silesian Voivodeship, [Terytorialny Plan Sprawiedliwej Transformacji Województwa Śląskiego 2030](#), Silesian Voivodeship, 21 December 2022.

plan had been expected to include a more detailed timetable of the transformation, the version submitted in January 2024 did not differ in any great detail from the previous version. In March 2024, the European Commission requested further amendments. At the time of writing this briefing, the plan had still not been formally approved by the European Commission. It should also be noted that the plans for Poland's just transition regions vary considerably. They were also written with varying levels of public participation, which has affected their quality.

The funds allocated to Poland amount to around EUR 3.85 billion, including for technical assistance. The Just Transition Fund for Poland is divided among the five regions as follows: EUR 2.128 billion for Upper Silesia, EUR 254 million for Western Małopolska (based on the Upper Silesian plan), EUR 581.5 million for Lower Silesia (Wałbrzych),⁵ EUR 415 million for Eastern Wielkopolska,⁶ and EUR 370 million for Łódź (Bełchatów).⁷

The plans that have been approved by the European Commission have now entered the implementation phase, which means that potential investors are able to apply for funding under all three mechanisms in accordance with what was established as funding priorities in the approved plans. In most countries, including Poland, monitoring committees have been established to oversee the use of EU funds and the implementation of projects is now underway.

⁵ Lower Silesian Voivodeship, [Terytorialny Plan Sprawiedliwej Transformacji Dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego 2021-2030 Subregion Wałbrzyski Wersja 10.0 Po Uwagach KE](#), Lower Silesian Voivodeship, December 2022.

⁶ Local Government of Wielkopolska Voivodeship, [Terytorialny Plan Sprawiedliwej Transformacji Wielkopolski Wschodniej](#), Local Government of Wielkopolska Voivodeship, December 2022.

⁷ The previous version of the plan is available here: Łódź Voivodeship, [Terytorialny Plan Sprawiedliwej Transformacji Województwa Łódzkiego](#), Łódź Voivodeship, 14 April 2023, Annex 3. The updated version was published on 23 December 2023: Łódź Voivodeship, [Terytorialny Plan Sprawiedliwej Transformacji Województwa Łódzkiego](#), Łódź Voivodeship, 23 December 2023, Annex 3. This briefing focuses on the updated document.

Methodology⁸

The plans for Poland were carefully examined and assessed in a four-step process. First, we delved into the primary intended policy outcomes. This involved identifying the key sectors targeted in the plans, summarising the estimated jobs lost and created, and analysing the proposed reduction in carbon emissions. We also scrutinised aspirations related to the phase-out of fossil fuels and the promotion of renewable energy.

In the second step, we closely evaluated the expected impacts of the plans. This encompassed a comprehensive analysis of six critical elements: the economic, environmental, employment, and social implications of the plans, as well as potential areas for growth and retraining requirements.

Moving on to the third step, we categorised the most significant economic, social, and environmental policies in a table format. Economic policies were defined as those directly targeting the private sector or the improvement of employment conditions. Employment policies, for instance, were grouped under economic policies due to their primary benefits for private companies and individuals. Economic policies encompassed initiatives such as investments in small and medium-sized enterprises, workforce retraining or upskilling, and investments in large businesses. Environmental policies focused on measures to enhance the environment, including increasing renewable energy production and brownfield decontamination. Social policies were defined as those aimed at improving the communal and public conditions of regions and benefitting large segments of the population. These policies covered investments in social and healthcare, education (excluding retraining or upskilling), and public research organisations. Economic policies were further categorised into those related to employment, retraining and upskilling, small and medium-sized enterprises, and large enterprises. Social policies were divided into areas such as social issues, care for children and older people, public sector research and development, education, and small-scale community initiatives. Environmental policies were categorised based on their relationship to energy and land development.

In the fourth and final step, we utilised the Cohesion Open Data Platform⁹ to investigate the allocation of funds for specific policies. We calculated the percentage of the total budget allocated within the Just Transition Fund to each policy. It should be noted that just transition regions will also receive money from other European funds, including the second and third pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism, the European Social Fund, the Modernisation Fund, the Cohesion Fund, and national funds. However, it was not possible to include an analysis of all these additional allocations in this briefing.

⁸ The methodology is adapted from previous research conducted by Michiel Stapper, Assistant Professor at Tilburg Law School. See: Michiel Stapper, [The Road to a Just Transition: A Comparative Analysis of Territorial Just Transition Plans](#), *Foundation for European Progressive Studies*, April 2022.

⁹ European Commission, [Cohesion Open Data Platform](#), *Cohesion Open Data Platform*, accessed 9 September 2023.

Following the money: the Just Transition Fund for Poland

Planned policy implementation outcomes

Table 1. Planned outcomes of the just transition in Poland based on the Territorial Just Transition Plans.¹⁰

Regions	Sectors targeted	Estimated job losses	Estimated new jobs	Greenhouse gas emission reduction	Phase-out of fossil fuels	Percentage of renewable energy in 2030
Upper Silesia (including an allocation for Western Małopolska)	Hard coal mining and related energy production	Upper Silesia: Total job losses across mining, energy, and other sectors: 36,500 by 2030. Mining sector alone: 12,300 by 2030, with an additional 48,700 between 2030 and 2049. Western Małopolska: Direct job losses in the mining sector: 4,000 by 2050. Direct job losses in related energy production sectors: 220 by 2050. Indirect job losses in the mining sector: up to 10,000 by 2050. Indirect job losses in related energy production sectors: 2,000 by 2050.	Upper Silesia: Estimated jobs created, excluding those created by large enterprises: 25,200. Employment gap (difference between projected job losses and jobs created by large enterprises): 11,300. Anticipated reduction in employment gap: 2,100 jobs created by large enterprises. Western Małopolska: Similar employment situation to Silesia due to shared plan.	Upper Silesia: Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels: 30%. Western Małopolska: 49-kilotonne reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. Estimated energy mix in 2030: coal (61.4%), renewable energy sources (7.2%), other sources, primarily gas (31.3%). Current levels are 84, 6.7, and 9%, respectively.	Upper Silesia: No phase-out date provided. Western Małopolska: phase-out expected by 2049.	Upper Silesia: Implementation of new renewable energy sources expected to boost annual energy production to 145,111 megawatt hours per year, an increase of 9.9% compared to 2020 output. Western Małopolska: No information provided.

¹⁰ Developed by CEE Bankwatch Network based on a methodology formulated by Michiel Stapper and data contained in the Territorial Just Transition Plans for Poland.

<p>Lower Silesia (Wrocław)</p>	<p>Impacts of coal-mining closures in the 1990s</p>	<p>145,000 job losses (dated to the 1990s)</p>	<p>7,000 by 2030</p>	<p>Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2030: 3.58 million tonnes = a 55% reduction compared to 2022 levels.</p>	<p>Phase-out completed in the 1990s.</p>	<p>Increase in installed renewable energy capacity: 56 megawatts. Annual production from renewable energy sources: at least 56 megawatt hours.</p>
<p>Łódź Voivodeship (Bełchatów)</p>	<p>Lignite coal mining and related energy production</p>	<p>Both versions: Direct job losses in the mining and energy sectors: 8,364. Indirect job losses: 20,000.</p>	<p>Both versions: Jobs created for people currently employed in the mining and energy sectors: 4,500.</p>	<p>Both versions: Reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 compared to 2022 levels: 80%.</p>	<p>2022 version: Not clearly stated, despite references to national documents, which have a 2050 target. Dates given for the closure of various mines and energy plant units. Plans to open Złoczew mine abandoned. Bełchatów lignite deposit to close by 2030. No reference to timeline for closure of Szczerców lignite deposit and energy plant units (except for one unit to be closed in 2030).</p> <p>2024 proposal: As above. Bełchatów mining field to close by the end of 2028. Plans to open the Złoczew mine abandoned. Closure of one energy plant unit</p>	<p>New renewable energy projects in post-mining areas, with a minimum capacity of 130 megawatts by 2030.</p>

					by the end of 2030. No reference to timeline for closure of Szczerców lignite deposit and other energy plant units.	
Eastern Wielkopolska	Lignite coal mining and related energy production sector	2200	Jobs created as a result of implementing the plan, excluding vacancies created by large enterprises: 1,100. Employment gap of 1100 jobs. Jobs created as a result of interventions targeting large enterprises: 455.	Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in the energy industry by 2030: 90–95%. Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in other sectors by 2040: 80–90%. Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions across all sectors by 2030: 55%.	2030 for both mining and energy sector	Increased share of renewables consumed to 32% by 2030

Poland’s Territorial Just Transition Plans differ enormously in almost all aspects. Just as the four approved plans take radically different approaches to achieving climate neutrality, the key steps outlined for achieving the 2030 climate and energy targets also vary greatly.

Generally, the climate and energy targets set out in the above plans reflect a general lack of ambition. The one notable exception is the plan for Eastern Wielkopolska, which intends to phase out coal completely by 2030 and achieve climate neutrality by 2040. Public statements issued by the Ministry of Climate and Environment have suggested that the coal phase-out in Poland might occur in 2049, but this position has yet to be officially endorsed.¹¹ Adding to the confusion, the plans do not include dates for the closure of

¹¹ As of December 2023, the new government has yet to officially announce a coal phase-out date. However, in a tweet posted on 4 November 2021, the then Minister of Climate and Environment Anna Moskwa announced that 2049 would be the planned phase-out date for coal in Poland. This statement followed an earlier tweet released by the Ministry, which stated that the coal phase-out would occur in the 2040s at the earliest. See: Martyna Maciuch, [Polska odejdzie od węgla dopiero w 2049? Tą deklaracją wypisujemy się z grona państw rozwiniętych, wskazują eksperci](#), 300Gospodarka.pl, 5 November 2021.

private mines in Silesia, notably the four coking coal mines owned by Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa, the Bogdanka coking coal mine in Lublin Voivodeship, and the Turów lignite mine in Lower Silesia. Additionally, given that Poland is home to extensive steel, chemical and cement industries, it should be assumed that further applications for Just Transition Fund support will be submitted in the next funding period. Nevertheless, based on preparations for the implementation of the plans at the regional level, Poland's just transition regions are evidently embracing a more ambitious approach to the coal phase-out of coal than they did previously.

The Silesian plan, covering both Silesia and Western Małopolska, acknowledges the overarching EU target of climate neutrality by 2050. But it fails to describe how this will be achieved locally. The plan focuses on limiting the use of hard coal in the energy sector and the regional economy by 2030. Five of the 18 Upper Silesian mines listed in the plan are expected to end production or significantly reduce operations by 2030. However, the two Western Małopolska mines listed are only expected to cease operating by the 2040s. Under the proposed interventions, there will be a shift in electricity production to newly built renewable energy installations, generating approximately 145,111 megawatt hours of energy per year, an increase of 9.9 per cent compared to 2020 output. In Western Małopolska, the planned development of renewable energy infrastructure will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 49 kilotonnes. The energy mix in 2030 is estimated to consist of coal (61.4 per cent), renewable energy (7.2 per cent), and other sources, primarily gas (31.3 per cent). The current energy mix is 84, 6.7, and 9 per cent, respectively.

The plan for Lower Silesia (Wałbrzych) was initially supposed to be based on an early version of the Energy Strategy of Lower Silesia,¹² which sets climate neutrality by 2040 as a key target. Unfortunately, this goal was not approved for inclusion in the Energy Strategy or the Territorial Just Transition Plan for Wałbrzych. The plan for Lower Silesia (Wałbrzych) forecasts a 55 per cent reduction in total emissions by 2030 compared to 2022 levels. The plan prioritises the decarbonisation and thermal modernisation of buildings as well as measures aimed at encouraging businesses to adopt green technologies. By 2030, the region aims to increase installed renewable energy capacity by 56 megawatts compared to 2022 levels, reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions in the construction and heating sectors, and improve energy efficiency measures.

The plan for Eastern Wielkopolska, while acknowledging the national framework for the transition, outlines more ambitious measures to phase out coal by 2030 and achieve climate neutrality by 2040. To this end, the region plans to undertake various activities aimed at increasing energy efficiency and developing renewable sources of energy. By 2030, the region plans to phase out and replace lignite and other forms of coal from mining, energy, and heat production with renewable energy sources. The future energy system will be led by energy communities and based on individual production.

The Łódź (Bełchatów) plan refers to the EU's climate neutrality goal, but places greater emphasis on two key national strategic documents: the Energy Policy of Poland until 2040 (EPP2040)¹³ and the current national energy and climate plan.¹⁴ However, neither of these documents align with the EU's goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The timeline for the coal phase-out provided in the plan does not

¹² Lower Silesian Voivodeship, [Strategia Energetyczna Dolnego Śląska – Kierunki Wsparcia Sektora Energetycznego](#), Lower Silesian Voivodeship, 25 October 2022.

¹³ Ministry of Climate and Environment of Poland, [Energy Policy of Poland Until 2040](#), Ministry of Climate and Environment of Poland, 2 February 2021.

¹⁴ Ministry of State Assets of Poland, [Krajowy plan na rzecz energii i klimatu na lata 2021-2030](#), Ministry of State Assets of Poland, 18 December 2019.

include all of the mines and energy plant units in the region. The plan only provides limited details, such as the expected closure of the Bełchatów lignite deposit by 2028, one energy plant unit by 2030, and the abandonment of plans to open a mine in Złoczew. However, there is no mention of how long the Szczerców lignite deposit will continue or when the Bełchatów energy plant will closed. According to a document outlining its strategy until 2030,¹⁵ Polska Grupa Energetyczna (PGE), Poland's largest energy group and the manager of the mines and energy plant in Bełchatów, sets a goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. However, the strategy does not provide a clear roadmap for how this will be achieved. The Łódź (Bełchatów) plan aims to reduce carbon emissions by 80 per cent by 2030 compared to 2020 levels. The plan also states that various renewable energy investments, representing a total capacity of 171.5 megawatts, will increase the share of renewable energy sources in energy consumption. Increasing energy efficiency through thermal upgrades and energy-saving solutions will bring the region closer to achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

Overall, the plans provide a detailed account of the measures needed to advance renewable energy sources and sectors connected with the green transition. The plans are also notable for their increased ambition, setting objectives to enhance energy-efficient measures and address heating and cooling needs.

Predicted economic, employment, environmental and social impacts of the just transition in Poland

Due to the high dependence on coal in the Polish energy sector, the impacts of the just transition are expected to be considerable.

Upper Silesia and Western Małopolska are expected to be most severely affected by the transition due to intensive hard coal mining in these regions, their geographical scope, and the high employment rates within the coal industry and related sectors. However, unlike the lignite-mining regions of Bełchatów and Eastern Wielkopolska, where coal mining and energy production dominate the local economies, Upper Silesia is an agglomeration of relatively large municipalities that boast industries other than coal, research and education facilities, as well as greater opportunities for economic development.

Nevertheless, Upper Silesia faces serious employment challenges, including the predicted loss of approximately 120,000 direct jobs in the sector, an ageing population, a low employment rate among women, and the prospect of increased migration. Therefore, the need to widen the skills of the workforce and improve educational opportunities is particularly pressing. The plan highlights an equally urgent need to invest in the research, development and innovation of the high-tech sector, green industries, and entrepreneurship. To mitigate environmental impacts in the region, the plan calls for the recultivation and revitalisation of land degraded by mining and the management of waste material accumulated from decades of extraction. Additionally, the plan warns that municipal budgets will be dented by a decrease in mining-related revenues. Finally, quality-of-life indicators need to improve, not least a reduction in car traffic.

The plan for Lower Silesia, which focuses on the subregion of Wałbrzych (where most coal-related jobs were lost in the 1990s), proposes transforming the local job market with the aim of creating around 7,000 jobs in the green economy by 2030. Due to the negative impacts of the shut-down of the mining industry in the

¹⁵ PGE Group, [Strategy 2030](#), PGE Group, 19 October 2020.

1990s, the economy of the region collapsed, resulting in high unemployment and a decline in the population. The transition in the 1990s also had a significant negative impact on the education sector, leading to the poor performance of secondary school students in the region. To mitigate the effects of the coal phase-out, the plan acknowledges the need to provide transitioning workers and students with the skills necessary to thrive in the future economy. The consequences of shaft mining, particularly the degradation of environmental conditions, are recognised as a challenge the region continues to face. There are plans to invest heavily in extensive deep renovation projects, which are likely to have a substantial impact on reducing emissions. Unlike the other just transition regions in Poland, the plan for Lower Silesia seeks to correct the mistakes of the transition so badly managed some 30 years ago.

The plan for Eastern Wielkopolska outlines the potential negative impacts of the transition. One of the key concerns is that rushing to reach the ambitious goal of climate neutrality by 2040 could trigger a socio-economic crisis in the region. It anticipates that up to 2,200 jobs will be lost due to the coal mining phase-out alongside the creation of 1,100 new positions, amounting to a net loss of 1,100 jobs. The plan flags several problematic social phenomena in the region, including an ageing local population, youth migration, and poverty. It warns that these issues will be amplified by the eventual closure of the mines and plants in the region, which will in turn significantly reduce the incomes of municipalities and their capacity to perform vital tasks. The document also identifies the challenge of managing the considerable swathes of devastated land caused by extraction activities.

The plan for Łódź (Bełchatów) primarily focuses on the negative economic and employment impacts of the transition. However, the claim that for every job lost at the mine, four jobs will be created in regional partner businesses is unsubstantiated. Equally doubtful is the estimate that a failure to restore 1,773 jobs would result in the loss of 7,092 jobs in the region. Based on materials released by coal companies operating in Upper Silesia, this figure is wide of the mark. According to the Institute for Structural Research,¹⁶ each full-time mining-related position actually generates between 1.16 and 1.35 jobs in other sectors of the economy. Irrespective of these discrepancies, the transition is likely to have dire economic consequences due to the lack of diversification in the region, resulting in negative social impacts, higher unemployment rates, and a further decline in the population. There are also concerns over the emissions generated by coal-burning household heaters and the expected increase in energy prices due to the closure of energy plants.

¹⁶ Jan Frankowski, Joanna Mazurkiewicz, Robert Krzysztofik, [Województwo śląskie w punkcie zwrotnym transformacji](#), *Institute for Structural Research*, 19 October 2020.

Where will the money go?

Table 2. Planned allocation for Poland.¹⁷

			Amount (EUR)	Percentage (approximate)	
Economic policies	Employment		160 654 751	5.2%	
	Retraining and upskilling		0	0%	
	Small and medium-sized enterprises (≈30.7%)	Investments in small and medium-sized enterprises		782 007 718	25.3%
		Incubators		0	0%
		Research, development and innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises		166 832 666	5.4%
	Large enterprises (≈4.92%)	Investments in large enterprises		53 000 000	1.7%
		Research, development and innovation in large enterprises		99 063 209	3.2%
TOTAL			1 261 558 344	≈ 40.8%	
Environmental policies	Energy (≈17.4%)	Investments in renewable energy sources	295 319 872	9.6%	
		Infrastructure for renewable energy sources	0	0%	
		Energy communities	0	0%	
		Energy efficiency and retrofitting	242 000 000	7.8%	
	Land development and other environmental projects (≈19.6%)	Land rehabilitation	563 340 137	16.2%	
		Waste	0	0%	
		Mobility	167 212 108	5.4%	
		Climate adaptation (including water management projects)	0	0%	
TOTAL			1 267 872 117	≈ 41%	

¹⁷ Developed by CEE Bankwatch Network based on a methodology by Michiel Stapper and data on Just Transition Fund allocation for the 2021–2027 budgeting period obtained from the Cohesion Open Data Platform. See: European Commission, [Just Transition Fund \(JTF\)](#), *Cohesion Open Data Platform*, accessed 6 March 2024; see also: Annex 1.

Social policies	Social issues		59 000 000	1.9%
	Care for children and older people		0	0%
	Research, development and innovation in the public sector		0	0%
	Education (excluding retraining and upskilling)		501 054 398	16.2%
	Small-scale community initiatives		0	0%
TOTAL			560 054 398	≈18.1%
Sum total for Poland			3 089 484 859	100%
Other			617 066 455	
Technical assistance (small portion included in the 'other' category)			153 893 858	
Sum total for Poland including allocations and technical assistance			3 847 346 473	

The total sum of money allocated to Poland from the Just Transition Fund currently amounts to roughly EUR 3.85 billion, the highest allocation in the EU. In addition, approximately EUR 154 million has been designated for technical assistance.

The majority of Poland's Just Transition Fund has been allocated to support small and medium-sized enterprises (30.7 per cent), rehabilitate land (19.2 per cent), improve the public education system (16.2 per cent), and develop renewable energy sources (9.6 per cent) and energy efficiency (7.8 per cent).

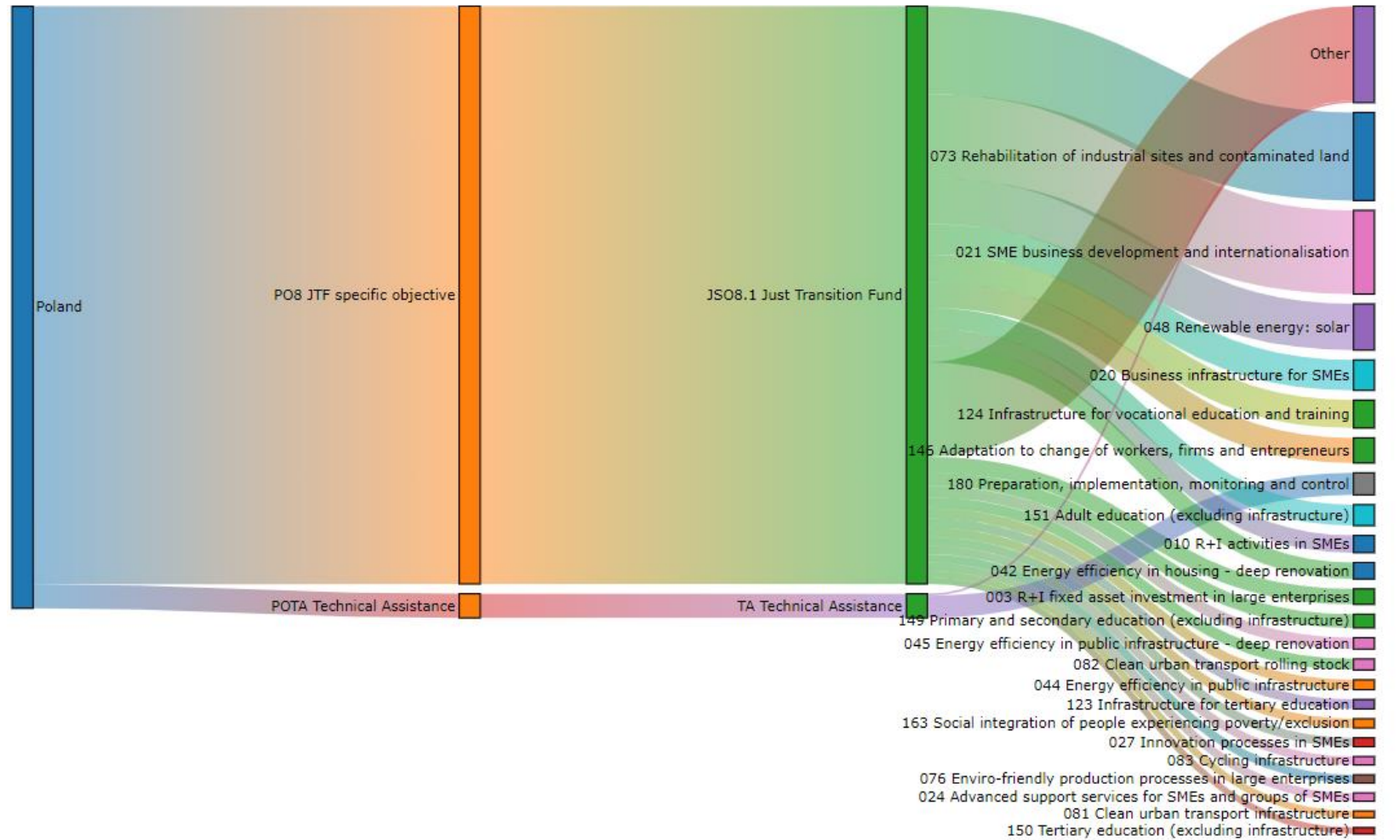
Although the plans recognise the probable severe impacts on employment across all regions, the allocation for re-employment schemes is surprisingly low at only 5.2 per cent. The expectation seems to be that job losses will be offset by economic diversification, including through increased employment among small and medium-sized enterprises. The significant allocation for research, development and innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises indicates a plan to improve green technology value chains and ensure the long-term viability of industries. Investments in small and medium-sized enterprises primarily target business development and internationalisation, related business infrastructure, and advanced support services. In contrast, large enterprises receive a much smaller allocation (4.9 per cent), mainly focusing on the development of eco-friendly production processes alongside research and development.

While renewable energy investments mainly focus on solar panels, energy efficiency measures target deep renovations of housing and public infrastructure. Interestingly, a sizeable amount of the Just Transition Fund budget is allocated for the development of clean urban transport, including rolling stock and infrastructure, presumably electric and hydrogen buses, with cycling infrastructure receiving a smaller allocation. Approximately EUR 563 million has been earmarked for the rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land. Energy communities, waste management, and climate adaptation are identified as potentially important aspects of the plans for Eastern Wielkopolska and Upper Silesia. Regrettably, however, no investments have been allocated for any of these areas.

Similar to many of the plans in central and eastern Europe, the lowest allocation has been set aside for addressing the social impacts of the transition (18 per cent). Roughly EUR 59 million has been allocated for the purpose of supporting the social integration of people experiencing energy poverty or exclusion. But no funding has been earmarked for care services assisting children and older people, public sector research and development measures, or small-scale community initiatives. On a more positive note, there is a substantial allocation for educational initiatives across adult, vocational, primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education.

Annex 1

Table 3. Just Transition Fund allocation for Poland.



Refresh Date: 06/03/2024