



Just Transition

Cultural Aspect

Need for a holistic and inclusive approach

UNECE





A need for a holistic approach

- A strategy encompassing all aspects (social, economic, environmental) and aiming for a long-term development of a given region is necessary.
- Without an all-encompassing approach, undertaken projects will be developed in silos and will not add up to a strategy allowing to change the economic profile of the region in question.



Cultural aspect

- For centuries coal mining has been much more than an occupation.
- It has been a way of life with its own traditions, legends, saints, music, clothes, language, cuisine, etc.
- It provided a sense of identity and belonging to a given community, and with a sense of adherence to a given culture and heritage.
- Transformation needs to offer people a new life which will, on the one hand, provide them not only with the sense of material security, but also with an opportunity to remain themselves culture-wise.
- By nature, people fear change. The new is always unknown, unpredicted, and thus scary.
- It might not always be articulated but it is not just a fear of losing job. It is the fear of losing the world that they know. The world that not only makes sense to them but also defines their lives.
- Peaceful transformation requires assuring people that the fact that their economic activity needs to change, does not mean that they have to abandon all what they know and believe in.
- Coal mining is a true culture on its own right and as such should be protected in the same way as we protect certain languages, minorities, or tribes, which constitute a testimony of the human history and are a living prove of our cultural diversity.
- The fact that the world which gave rise to that culture is coming to an end, does not mean that the culture itself is not worth preserving.



A bottom-up approach

- Transition must come from the inside; from people.
- Just transition is now promoted through hundreds of projects and countless organizations.
- Most initiatives have one thing in common: they offer a solution; claim to know what needs to be done.
- Our approach is an expression of a disagreement with such thinking.
- While it is necessary to indicate to people what and how they could change to find themselves in better position in the new economic and environmental reality, those suggestions should not offer any preconceived solutions. They should inform people about the challenge that they face and the changes that are happening around them, and guide them, but not lead, through a thought process allowing them to identify their objectives and the means of achieving them themselves.
- We must allow people to make their choices, to own the process, and be responsible for its outcomes.
- Transition is a task of teaching people how to fish, rather than of serving them fish on a golden platter.
- If the transition is to render good and sustainable results, those results must be accepted and appreciated by the communities.



Our work in Ukraine

- Our focus is on a local level.
- We work with a large group of mayors of towns and cities reliant, to a grater or lesser extent, on coal mining.
- We are in contact with the relevant Central Authorities.
- We cooperate with the World Bank.
- We look forward to cooperating with all other stakeholders acting in the field in question in the country.



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Transition

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Thank you!

