

**RES-SKILL**

**Reskilling coal industry workers for  
the renewables energy sector**

**O4-T1: Strategic Plan of  
Joint Competence Centres  
establishment  
with Statutory Provisions**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AES</b>	AES Galabovo Thermal Power Plant
<b>BDB</b>	The Education Directorate for Burgenland
<b>BFI</b>	BFI Burgenland
<b>CCI</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Stara Zagora
<b>C-VET</b>	Continuous Vocational Education and Training
<b>ECVET</b>	European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training
<b>EMI</b>	Energy Management Institute
<b>EQF</b>	European Qualification Framework
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>I-VET</b>	Initial Vocational Education and Training
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>LTT</b>	Liceul Tehnologic Ticlani
<b>MEERI</b>	Institute for Research on Minerals and Energy Economy
<b>OER</b>	Open Educational Resources
<b>PEDDM</b>	Regional Association of Local Governments of Western Macedonia
<b>PROMEIA</b>	Hellenic Society for the Promotion of Research and Development Methodologies
<b>RENAC</b>	Renewables Academy
<b>RES</b>	Renewable Energy Sources
<b>RES-SKILL</b>	Reskilling coal industry workers for the renewables energy sector
<b>SZREDA</b>	Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training



## Introduction

The skills and qualifications of coal miners or other jobs in the coal industry do not necessarily match the requirements of the RE sector. But some skills already present in their everyday work, might fit quite well with some job profiles of emerging RE and new energy technologies, primarily in electrical, mechanical tasks or beyond. It is the core ambition of this project to identify skills that can enable these former coal workers to participate in the structural change of the energy sector.

### 1.1 About the Output 4

The purpose of the output is to develop resources for the establishment of pilot Joint Competence Centre within RES-SKILL project, namely a strategic plan with statutory provisions as well as an operational plan, which will facilitate the proper functioning of the centers. The role of the Centres is to offer career reorientation services and opportunities for coal workers that want to transition to RE sector jobs. The Centres are expected to be established in coal regions in transition, as defined by EC, to promote and facilitate the valorisation of project materials as good practices for ensuring the employment status of coal workers and for reaching out to:

- a) coal workers interested in switching to the RES industry
- b) public and sectoral authorities involved in the employment issues of coal workers.

The resources to be developed for this output will include: a) a template with Purpose Statements and Statutory provisions, which will specify the role, the mission, and the objectives of the Centres, providing also guidelines and steps to be followed for their establishment (O4-T1); b) an Operational Plan, which will function as a blueprint for the efficient operation of the Centre, offering management, financial, and sustainability strategies. In addition, this output will implement a pilot run of establishing and operating a Joint Competence Centre, with a limited involvement of (former) coal workers.

### 1.2 Objectives of Output 4

The output is anticipated to promote the supply and quality of C-VET learning within the RES industry and of the career reorientation opportunities for coal workers by a) setting the ground for the establishment of Joint Competence Centres that will assist in the reskilling of coal workers in coal regions in transition, and b) bridging sectoral needs (i.e. actual workplace requirements) with the world of VET and policy-making, to improve VET provision for coal workers. It is also anticipated that it will significantly contribute to the uptake of RES-SKILL learning materials and standardisation of occupational requirements for coal workers in the RES sector, thus maximising project impact.

### 1.3 Methodology

This output is set to establish a Joint Competence Centre, which will act as career reorientation hub for coal workers. The establishment of the Centre will be based on a framework, in the



form of a strategic document (O4-T1); this framework will be developed in close consultation with policy stakeholders (e.g. regional development centres, social partners), RES industry actors (e.g. businesses), VET providers and national qualification agencies, to ensure its strategic relevance. Secondly, the establishment of the Centre will be based on an operational plan (O4-T2), with management, financial, and sustainability resources and guidelines, to function as a guiding document for the efficient operation and sustainability of the Centres. The consortium partnership will use the materials developed in O4-T1 & O4-T2 to set up a Joint Competence Centre (pilot; O4-T3), providing career reorientation assistance to a limited number of coal workers.

## **2 About Task 1: O4 – T1. Joint development of Strategic Plan with Statutory Provisions**

This task will deliver a Strategic Plan with Statutory Provisions, to function as the foundational document upon which the establishment of Joint Competence Centres will take place. The Plan will define the organisational goals, missions and values (including its long-term direction) to better understand the resources needed to be allocated to ensure the Centres' success. To this end, the Plan will include the definition of actions that need to be taken to achieve the Centres' to efficiently implement the career reorientation of coal workers that aim to be employed in the RES industry. To develop the Plan, consultation will take place with public and sectoral stakeholders involved in the coal and RES industries' policy-making (e.g. sector representatives, social partners, VET providers, regional development centres, and national qualification agencies).

The responsibilities for the elaboration of the current deliverable are distributed as follows: SZREDA will deliver the first draft of the Strategic Plan with Statutory Provisions after consultation with stakeholders & policy-makers, campaign to support its uptake. PROMEA, RENAC, BFI, LTT will provide of feedback on the draft Plan, consultation with stakeholders & policy-makers in their own territory, after which the deliverable will be finalized.

## **3 SWOT analysis**

In the Strategic plan developing, SZ REDA has applied the classical approach in such document preparing by means this process is used by the partnership to identify its vision, mission and goals in projects results further development and more specifically of Joint Competence Centres establishment with Statutory Provisions, the set of measures necessary to accomplish those vision, mission and goals. The SWOT analysis is applied to identify the underlying factors driving their current performance and the current state of the partnership involved in the project implementation.

Its capacity is assessed, highlighting successes and strengths, and identified opportunities for improvement. In developing the document, SZ REDA is focused on the challenges and goals that project partnership in its entirety would like to focus on over the next several years. In doing so, SZ REDA took into account opportunities in the carrier orientation and education, new trends and innovations in these areas, as well as the needs of coal workers and VETs as



our main target groups. What have also taken into account are the risks and other external factors that threaten the implementation of the pilot and following activities, including after the project end and its success in delivering this strategic plan. The strategic plan is based on data gathered from the real needs of the target groups.

### **Strengths:**

- ✓ A partnership of focused organisations and institutions willing to develop an applicable set of tools to support sustainable job-places in the coal regions in transition;
- ✓ Built a system, which could integrate online tools and cloud solutions, enabling work in an online environment, established processes;
- ✓ Proven networks of domestic and international partners in the VET and adult education sectors;
- ✓ Partnership in strong international organizations dedicated to VET and adult education sectors;
- ✓ Cooperation within the regions involved with representatives of local government, businesses, educational institutions;
- ✓ Proven multi-source funding opportunities,
- ✓ Capacity of partnership in project management in the sectors, knowledge and experience with multiple grant programmes;
- ✓ System and processes in place.

### **Weaknesses:**

- ✓ The range of topics and activities shall exceed the current capacity of the partnership;
- ✓ Insufficiency of regular financial support for regular activities, orientation of the partnership towards project funding;
- ✓ National and regional partnerships preferences to take the form of non-financial cooperation;
- ✓ Focus of the organisation on foreign grant programmes, the organisation subsidises a significant part of its local activities with funds earmarked for specific project activities;
- ✓ The partnership has opportunities for growth but does not take advantage of them due to limitation of the financial capacity;
- ✓ Breaks of effective communication of the partnership's activities and outreach to their target groups;
- ✓ An insufficiently well-established community among coal workers and their leaders promoting retraining opportunities
- ✓ Insufficiency of effective systematic work with the target groups, due to the politically high sensitiveness of the topic;
- ✓ Underdeveloped partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the regions (Memoranda of Cooperation with municipalities, VETs, relevant businesses);
- ✓ Negative attitudes of mining sector employees towards restructuring.

### **Opportunities:**



- ✓ Increased ambitions of the EU and its institutions and partners to develop more RES technologies and facilities;
- ✓ Available and applicable legislation framework, promoting and supporting institutional and business cooperation at EU level;
- ✓ International partners and institutions find it promising to work on the same topic, applying the partnership results;
- ✓ Inquiries for cooperation, offers to engage in collaborations from foreign and domestic partners;
- ✓ Adoption of the online environment for the applying of the partnership results;
- ✓ Growing interest of local governments and businesses to install RES in their premises and to use more green energy in their processes;
- ✓ Increasing interest of investors both in RES power plants building and exploitation and new factory for RES modules manufacturing and delivering;
- ✓ Increasing access to funding such training activities both for employers and workers through Territorial Just Transition Plans in the coal regions;
- ✓ The possibility for obtaining of a certificate for new professional qualification;

#### **Risks:**

- ✓ Continuation of the energy crises, provoked by the war in Ukraine which brought back the coal TPPs and the manipulative narrative of their supporters;
- ✓ Apathy of the society to support the green transition due to the manipulative narrative and increasing inflations levels;
- ✓ The hostile attitude of some political actors towards the green policies and related to their application activities;
- ✓ Delay in the implementation of the TJTPs due to insufficient administrative capacity;
- ✓ Bureaucratisation of TJTPs procedures for project approval and implementation;
- ✓ Low interest or boycott of the implementation of project results due to trade union activities in some regions;
- ✓ Lack of interest of the target groups in developing their competences within the provided by EU legislation framework which support territorial and economic cooperation

## **4 Strategic planning**

The Strategic Plan aims to further the following partnership's **VISION**:

We empower the partnership's target groups to create and apply the necessary PPP within EU coal regions to become leaders in their communities.

The Strategic Plan's **MISSION** statement is:



We, the Partnership provides a supportive and positive vocational training experience in which target groups are empowered to develop Joint Competence Centres resulting in great self-confidence, personal and professional growth.

The Partnership's **VALUES**, embedded in the Strategic Plan are:

- INTEGRITY
- RESPECT
- SERVICE
- EXCELLENCE
- COMMUNICATION & DIALOG

The Strategic Plan **main goal** is to be created conditions for smooth social transition in the coal regions by providing the foundations for this, such as creating and developing of Joint Competence Centres.

This goal upgrades the project's ones:

1. Develop a novel curriculum and tailored training content to facilitate coal industry workers' shift and integration into the renewables industry.
2. Support VET providers to integrate the RES-SKILL materials into their WBL and VET offerings.
3. Improve cooperation between VET providers and businesses to provide opportunities that will enable coal industry workers to transition to the RES sector.

The Strategic Plan is also anticipated that it will significantly contribute to the uptake of RES-SKILL learning materials and standardisation of occupational requirements for coal workers in the RES sector, thus maximising project impact.

The Joint Competence Centres are expected to be established in coal regions in transition, as defined by EC, as their fundamental role as Centres will be to offer career reorientation services for coal workers that want to transition to RES sector jobs. They are expected also to promote and facilitate the valorisation of project materials as good practices for ensuring the employment status of coal workers and for reaching out to:

- coal workers interested in switching to the RES industry;
- public and sectoral authorities involved in the employment of coal workers;

The Joint Competence Centres are anticipated to promote the supply and quality of C-VET learning within the RES industry and of the career reorientation opportunities for coal workers by:

- a) setting the ground that will assist in the reskilling of coal workers in coal regions in transition;
- b) bridging sectoral needs (i.e., actual workplace requirements) with the world of VET and businesses in the RES sector.



The SWOT analyses findings show that a solid legislative basis at EU level, common and applicable to all regions in the partnership, is needed to ensure to a large extent that these centres will work in collaboration according to common standards.

Moreover, this is a prerequisite for the transfer and integration of this approach in other coal regions in the EU.

As a result of several months researching, comparing and analysing of the EU legislation framework, the legal base at EU level, taken into consideration for creations and development of Joint Competence Centres includes the following 2 options:

- 1) **European Economic Interest Grouping**
- 2) European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC).

The first option: **European Economic Interest Grouping**, are introduced by Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85. It introduces a legal instrument at EU level in the form of a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) designed to minimise the legal, fiscal and psychological difficulties that natural persons, companies, firms and other bodies face in cooperating across borders.

**This regulation meets the need for the harmonious development of economic activity throughout the EU and the establishment of a single market offering conditions analogous to those of a national market.**

**The KEY POINT is that** an EEIG must be formed in accordance with the rules described in the above provided legislation.

The purpose of the grouping is to facilitate or develop the economic activities of its members by a pooling of resources, activities or skills. This is intended to produce better results than the members acting alone.

**There are several formation requirements as follows:**

- An EEIG can be formed by companies, firms and other legal entities governed by public or private law which have been formed in accordance with the law of an EU country and which have their registered office in the EU. It can also be formed by individuals carrying on an industrial, commercial, craft or agricultural activity or providing professional or other services in the EU.
- An EEIG must have at least 2 members from different EU countries.
- The contract for the formation of an EEIG must include its name, its official address and objects, the name, registration number and place of registration, if any, of each member of the grouping and the duration of the grouping, except where this is indefinite. The contract must be filed at the registry designated by each EU country. Registration in this manner confers full legal capacity on the EEIG throughout the EU.
- An EEIG may not invite investment by the public.
- An EEIG does not necessarily have to be formed with capital. Members are free to use alternative means of financing.
- An EEIG cannot employ more than 500 persons.



It is not intended that the grouping should make profits for itself.

The profits of an EEIG will be deemed to be the profits of its members and will be apportioned either according to the relevant clause in the contract or, failing such a clause, in equal shares. The profits or losses of an EEIG will be taxable only in the hands of its members.

As a counterweight to the contractual freedom which is at the basis of the EEIG and the fact that members are not required to provide a minimum amount of capital, each member of the EEIG has unlimited joint and several liability for its debts.

The second option: **European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)** allows public entities of different Member States to come together under a new entity with full legal personality.

The EGTC Regulation was established in 2006 and was the first European cooperation structure with a legal personality defined by the European Law.

It is designed to facilitate and promote territorial cooperation (cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation), in view of strengthening the economic and social cohesion of the European Union.

Through an EGTC Member State public authorities can set up a single joint structure to implement projects, investments or policies in the territory covered by the EGTC, whether co-financed by the EU budget or not.

EGTC members can be:

- Member States
- Regional or local authorities
- Associations
- Any other public body

The EGTC is unique in the sense that it enables public authorities of various Member States to team up and deliver joint services, without requiring a prior international agreement to be signed and ratified by national parliaments. Member States must however agree to the participation of potential members in their respective countries. The law applicable for the interpretation and application of the convention is that of the Member State in which the official EGTC headquarters are located.

An EGTC convention sets out in particular:

- The name of the EGTC and its headquarters
- The list of members
- The area it covers
- Its objective
- Its mission
- Its duration



An EGTC must have at least the following organs:

- An assembly made up of representatives of the EGTC members.
- A director representing the EGTC and acting on its behalf.

The Committee of the Regions keeps the official register of established EGTC. The register and other useful information including the relevant legislation are available on the [EGTC Platform](#).

The EGTC Platform integrates, through the coordination of the European Committee of the Regions, political and technical representatives of all the existing EGTCs. The Platform aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences on the ground, promoting the EGTC as a tool for territorial cohesion and to give visibility to EGTC projects, while also supporting the consultative works of the CoR in cross-border issues.

As far the target groups of the partnership efforts and activities include both public and private institutions and organisations, both options are applicable.

The Operational plan shall provide the next detailed steps in the Strategic plan implementation, incl.:

1. partners' consultations both within the partnership and within the regions with regional stakeholders what and how the above shortly described options to be applied. In case with EGTCs a [guidebook for registering](#) by CoR is provided.
2. Identifying the most appropriate option per region as both simultaneously are also possible as far the EGTC legislation does not allow private entities membership.
3. Setting up timeframe and budget frame for the measures' implementation.

## 5 Next steps

As a next step an Operational Plan for the Joint Competence Centres shall be drafted by PROMEA, which also shall implement a fine-tuning after partners' feedback: RENAC, BFI, LTT, SZ REDA.

The partnership is planned as a next step a pilot run of a Joint Competence Transition Centre for career reorientation.

The task will pilot test the development of a Joint Competence Centre for career reorientation, with limited participation (up to 10 individuals) of coal workers that aim to be employed in the RES industry.

SZ REDA will be responsible for the implementation of the pilot, and will set clear educational objectives of the outcome expected, will define the length of the pilot, and will engage with coal workers' associations to select the individuals that will benefit from it. Once the pilot is completed, the task will conclude with the delivery of a Lessons Learnt report, which will encapsulate the challenges and issues encountered, as well as the benefits for the learners.



## 6 Conclusion

The current document is a Strategic Plan for 'Joint Competence Centres' establishment by utilising the RES-SKILL Career re-orientation toolkit (O2) and OERs (O3).

The Strategic Plan, which also includes Statutory Provisions, shall serve as the foundational document upon which the establishment of Joint Competence Centres will take place. The Plan defined the organisational goals, missions and values (including its long-term direction) to better understand the resources needed to be allocated to ensure the Centres' success.

To this end, the Plan included the definition of actions that need to be taken to achieve the Centres' to efficiently implement the career reorientation of coal workers that aim to be employed in the RES industry.

During the Plan development, consultation have taken place with public and sectoral stakeholders involved in the coal and RES industries' policy-making (e.g. sector representatives, social partners, VET providers, regional development centres, and national qualification agencies).

The Strategic Plan with Statutory Provisions is delivered by SZ REDA after consultation with stakeholders & policy-makers, campaign to support its uptake. PROMEA, RENAC, BFI, LTT, as a member of partnership, provided of feedback on the draft Plan, consultation with stakeholders & policy-makers in their own territory.

## ANNEX I

### A TEMPLATE WITH PURPOSE STATEMENTS AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS

Coal region in transition	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Educational framework analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Need of materials adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/> Needed <input type="checkbox"/> No need
Certification procedure check	<input type="checkbox"/> Done <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear yet



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Analysis of labor force reskilling needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Done <input type="checkbox"/> Not conducted yet
Recruiting trainees for the reskilling	<input type="checkbox"/> Proceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Not finalized yet