



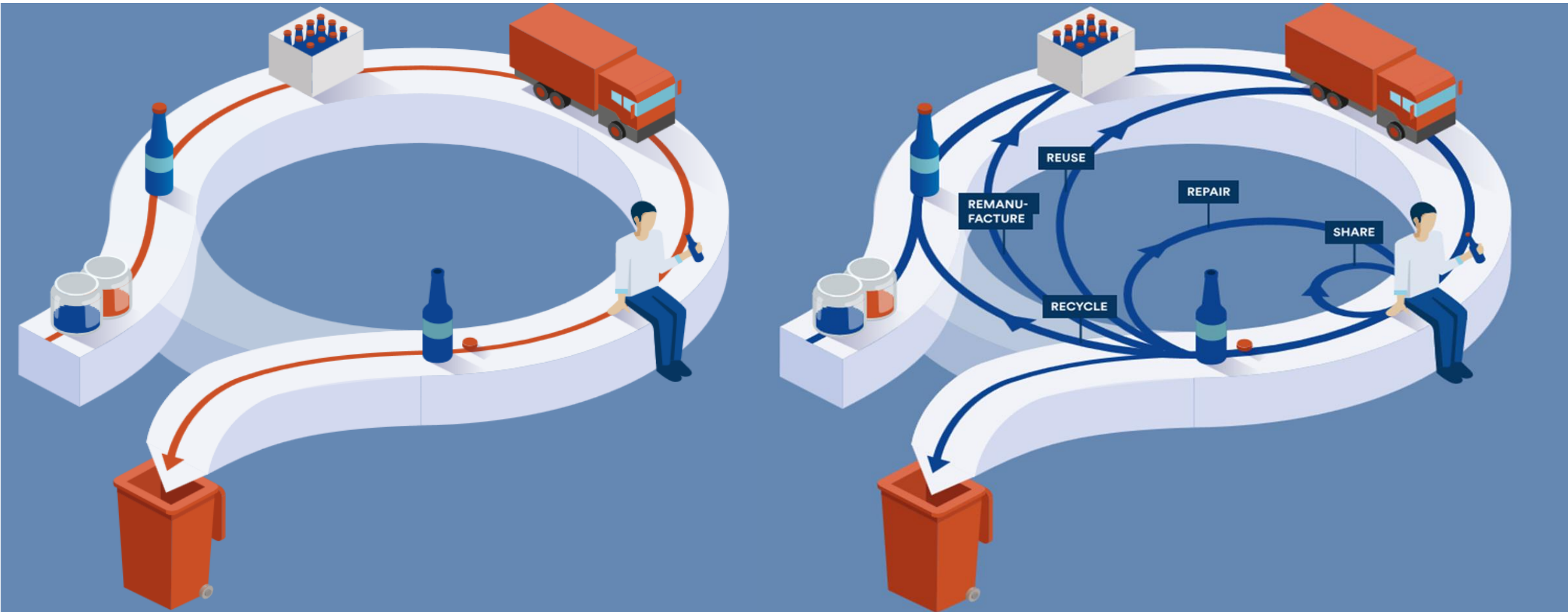
EU cohesion policy and the transition to a climate-neutral Europe

Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy

Green transition and regional and development - convergence paths or collision course ?

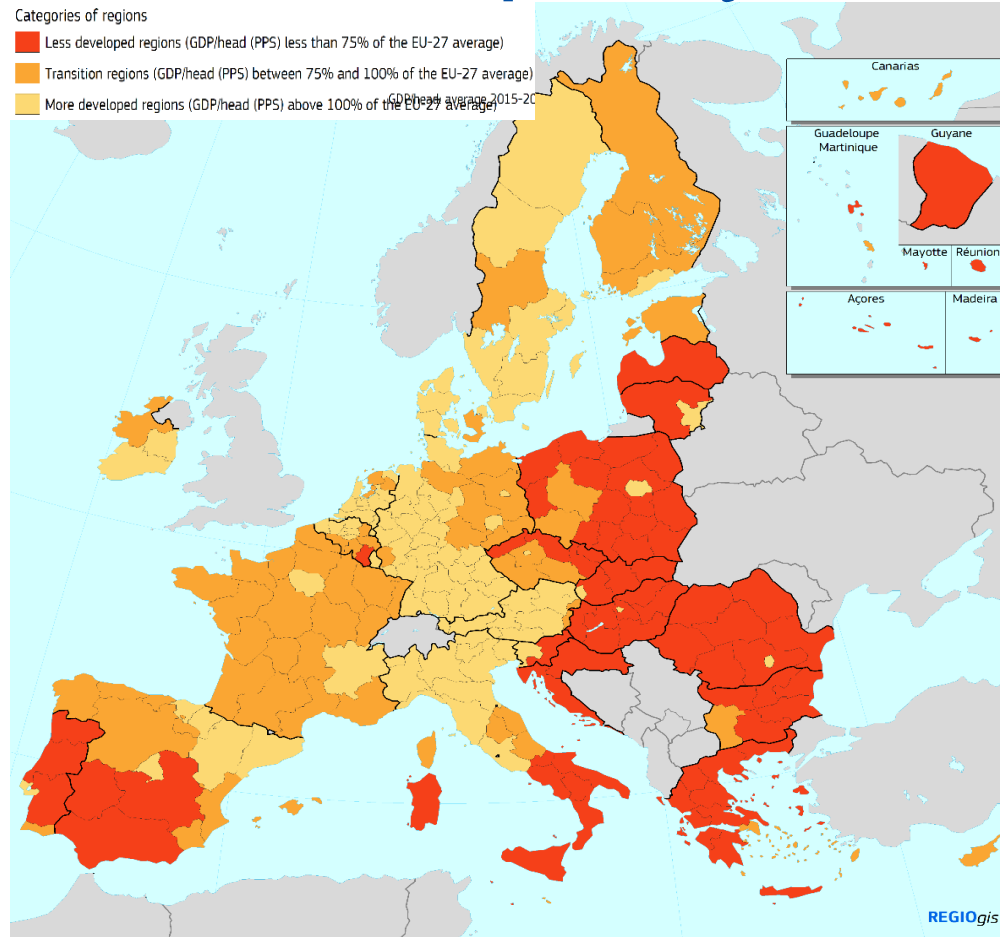


From a linear to a circular economy

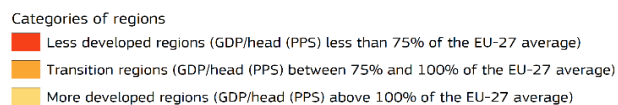


2021-2027 cohesion policy delivering the European Green Deal

Cohesion policy 2021-2027



Investment for jobs and growth goal (ERDF and ESF+) eligibility, 2021-2027



GDP/head: average 2015-2016-2017

0 500 km

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

- **EUR 392 billion** (European Regional Development Fund, Interreg, Cohesion Fund, European Social Fund Plus, Just Transition Fund) to:
 - Reduce disparities between Europe's regions, strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion
 - Contribute to EU priorities
- 5 Policy Objectives
 1. A more competitive and smarter Europe
 2. A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe
 3. A more connected Europe
 4. A more social and inclusive Europe
 5. A Europe closer to citizens

Policy Objective 2: A Greener Europe



- Eight specific objectives for ERDF and CF:
 - i. promoting **energy efficiency** and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
 - ii. promoting **renewable energy** in accordance with Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including the sustainability criteria set out therein;
 - iii. developing **smart energy systems, grids and storage** outside TEN-E;
 - iv. promoting **climate change adaptation**, and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches;
 - v. promoting access to water and **sustainable water management**;
 - vi. promoting the transition to a **circular and resource efficient economy**;
 - vii. enhancing protection and preservation of **nature, biodiversity** and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and **reducing all forms of pollution**;
 - viii. promoting **sustainable multimodal urban mobility**, as part of transition to a net zero carbon economy;

Delivering the European Green Deal



- The previous period (2014-2020):
 - 20% climate mainstreaming across the EU budget
 - Earmarking up to 20% ERDF for low-carbon economy
 - Ex-ante conditionalities linked to compliance with key legislation
- Reinforcements for current period:
 - 30% (ERFD) and 37% (CF) climate mainstreaming at fund level
 - Earmarking 30% ERDF at MS level for Policy Objective 2
 - Minimum spending ambition for biodiversity
 - Enabling conditions focused on effectiveness of spending
 - Excluding undesirable investment (e.g. fossil fuels, landfilling, treatment of residual waste)
 - Climate proofing of infrastructure projects
 - 'Do no significant harm' principle
 - Just Transition Mechanism and Just Transition Fund (additional funding)

A transformative agenda adapted to different starting points

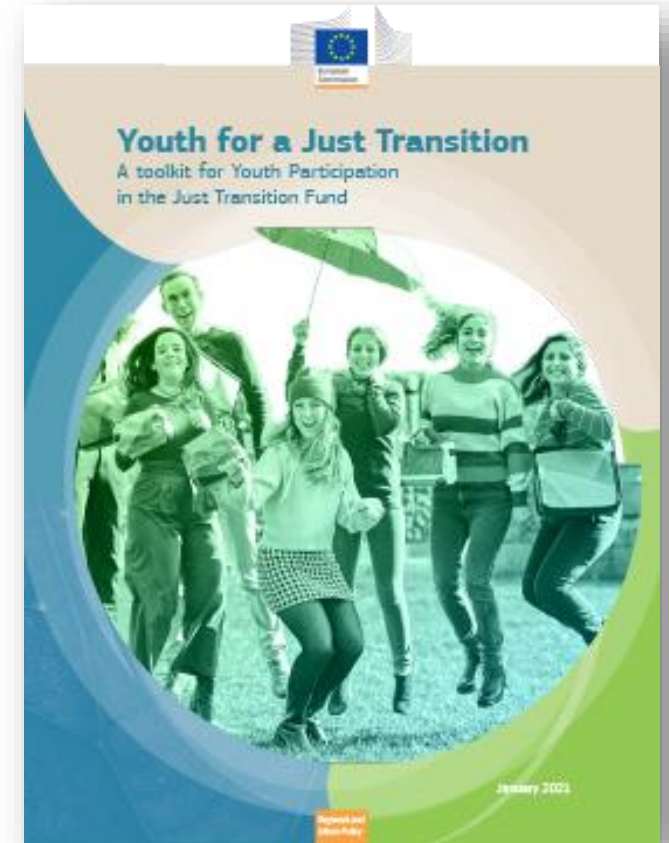
This is what we need our programmes to do better:

- Develop a **vision** of a sustainable future, and formulate **pathways**
- Put in place a system of proactive **governance** to manage the transition
- Support **innovation** to develop sustainable solutions
- Support **deployment** of innovation, and **phase-out** of unsustainable practices
- Ensure a **just transition** so that the transformation benefits everyone
- Apply specific **territorial approaches** to the delivery of the Green Deal (e.g. cities, rural areas, coal regions, cross-border regions)
- **Mainstream sustainability** into programmes and projects

Interreg and cooperation across borders



- Second objective of cohesion policy (10 billion)
- Funds for cooperation in border regions, or large spaces or among regions with similar profiles
- We are stronger together 😊
- Regional and local authorities, economic and social partners, civil society and research institutions and universities are normally involved
- Important role of youth



Some good practices from the past



Example: Centro Bio



- Turning waste from forestry and farming into petroleum substitutes
- Support for a biorefinery, biotech research, SME support and training for students
- Bio-based growth for rural economies, with first concrete results:
 - 52 highly-skilled jobs
 - 4 spin-offs
 - 6 start-ups
 - 24 R&D sub-projects

Operational Programme Centro, Portugal



Example: AlpLinkBioEco



- Bio-based value chains
- Partnership bio-feedstock producers, processors, product developers, retailers, end users
- Single methodology and 4 VCs created (wood, agriculture, food packaging and chemistry), with new business opportunities

*Cooperation Programme “Alpine Space”,
with participation from DE, AT, SI, IT and
CH*



Example: new textile (FI)



- Turning old cotton into innovative new fiber
- Contributes to:
 - commercialisation of the new technology
 - making textile industry more sustainable (less polluting chemicals, less waste generation)
 - boosting Helsinki-Uusimaa's clean technology specialisation

Operational Programme Sustainable growth and jobs (Finland)