From political goal to implementation: Who is building resilient, clean and fair value chains?

On the role of the state in industrial value creation, good working conditions and strong partnerships.

Brussels, 10 November 2026, 14h15-18h00
Hotel Martins Brussels EU
Bd Charlemagne 80, 1000 Bruxelles

Background

Fair, clean and resilient value chains are increasingly decisive for Europe's competitiveness. They are a prerequisite for a future-proof industry, quality jobs and long-term prosperity. Security of supply and strategic resilience, too, can only be achieved through secure value chains. International industrial partnerships are therefore gaining in importance.

However, partner countries also pursue their own industrial policy objectives. Rather than simply exporting raw materials, they want to generate their own value and create quality jobs. Given growing investment from China, the US and other countries, they now have significantly more room for maneuver than they did just a few years ago.

This raises a key question for Europe: how can international industrial partnerships be structured so that both sides benefit? And above all: who will ensure that political objectives are translated into concrete projects?

So far, European policymakers have relied primarily on private investment to achieve their industrial and geopolitical goals. However, companies make decisions based on economic criteria, whereas resilience, regional development and employment are public policy objectives. Consequently, the market-based approach will not work. Robust value chains cannot be achieved in this way.

The event therefore examines the role of the state. What tasks must it take on itself? What can companies achieve, and under what conditions? And what role do social partners play in building fair, clean and resilient value chains?

Two new studies from the *'Fair, Clean and Resilient Value Chains'* project form the starting point for this debate.

Registration and coffee | 13h45 – 14h15

Opening and welcome | 14h15 – 14h20

- **Richard Probst**, Director FES Competence Centre for Climate and Social Justice

Keynote: Combining European industry and international partnerships | 14h20 – 14h30

- **Thorben Albrecht**, Chairman of the German Trade Union Confederation in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

Panel 1 | 14h30 – 16h00

More than just the market – how is clean industrial value creation achieved?

Presentation of the report "Scaling Europe's clean-tech industry, lessons from East Asian startup-fueled industrial policy":

→ the role of start-ups as part of industrial ecosystems in transition → their interrelationships with established companies → lessons from South Korea and Japan

Presentation (via video) by **Robyn Klingler-Vidra**, Associate Professor, Political Economy and Entrepreneurship, King's College London

Discussion

Key questions:

- What role does the state play in building successful industrial and innovation ecosystems? What is unique about clean technologies and decarbonisation in this context?
- Where are market incentives sufficient – and where is strategic coordination needed?
- How to strengthen skills development and social partnership for industrial competitiveness?

Panelists:

- **Jacek Truszczynski**, Head of Unit Net Zero Industries, European Commission DG GROW
- **Thorben Albrecht**, Chairman of the German Trade Union Confederation in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
- **Ruben Davis**, Senior Policy Officer, Cleantech for Europe

Chair: **Stephan Thalhofer**, Policy advisor, FES Just Climate

Coffee break | 16h00-16h30

Panel 2 | 16h30-18h00

More than just raw materials – how are quality jobs created?

Discussion

Key questions:

- What role must the state play to ensure that international industrial partnerships generate local value creation and quality jobs?
- How can investment, technology transfer and employment be better linked?
- How important are fair participation and trade union representation of workers for decent jobs and industrial competitiveness?

Panelists:

- **Udo Bullmann**, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the Delegation for relations with South Africa
- **Emmanuel Adjei Danso**, Director Energy, Mining and DGOJP, IndustriALL Global Union, Geneva
- **Jandyra Uehara Alves**, National Secretary for Social Policies and Human Rights at the Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT), Brazil
- **Taneli Lahti**, Director Sustainable Finance, Investment and Jobs, European Commission, DG INTPA
- **Dominic Boucsein,** Head of International Trade Policy, Eurochambres

Chair: **Matthias Pesch**, Policy adviser, FES Geneva

Closing remarks | 18h00 – 18h15

Networking reception | 18h15