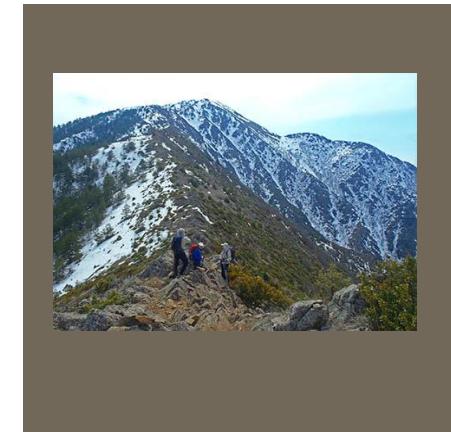
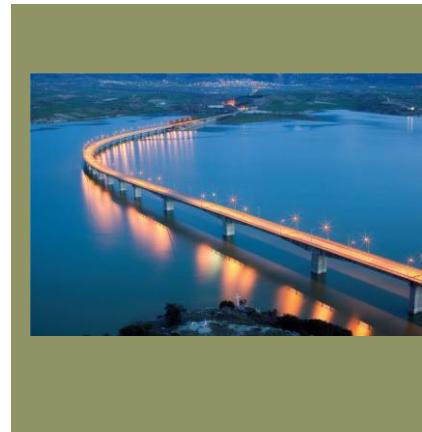




Municipality of Kozani,
Western Macedonia, Greece

Ioannidis Eleftherios
Mayor



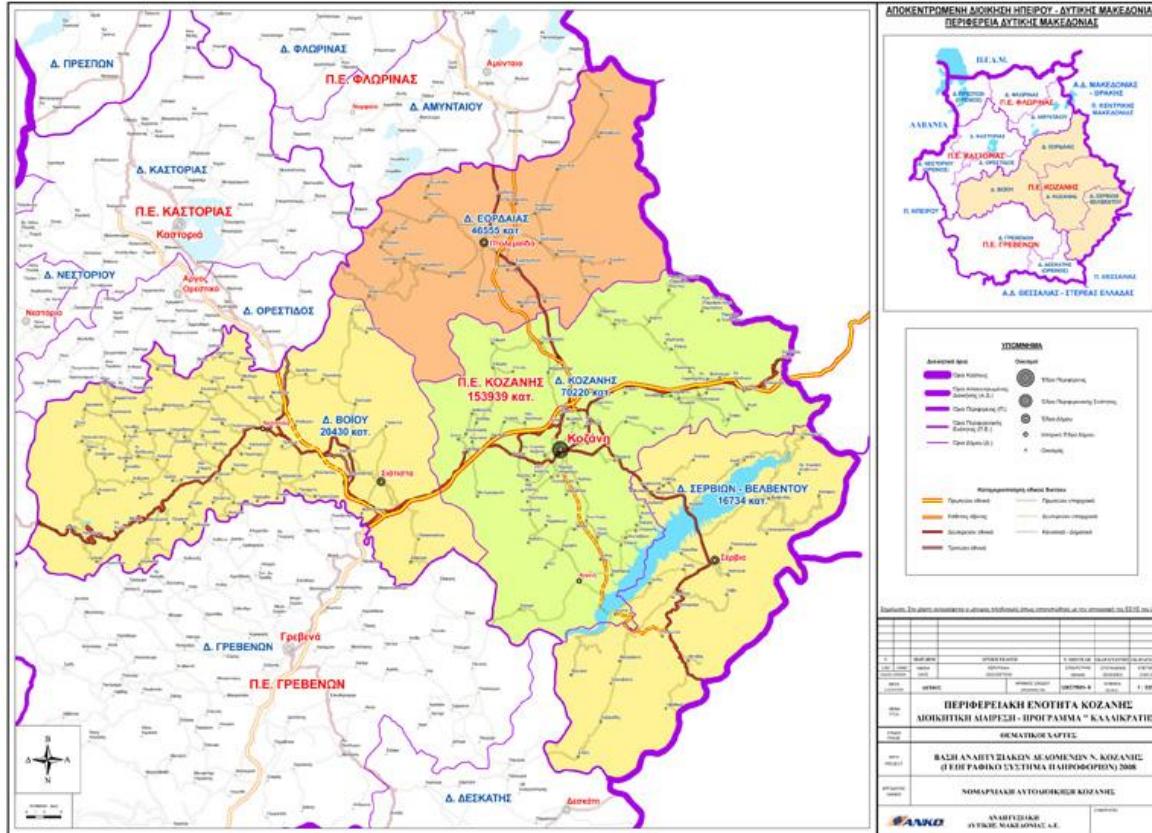
Towards a Green
post-Lignite Era



Kozani



+ Municipality of Kozani





The Municipality of Kozani statistics



- Population: 70,000 in (pop. Region 300.000 cat.)
- Land area: 1,072.3 km².
- 52 settlements with larger settlement town of Kozani, with a population of about 50,000.
- Unemployment: over 30%
- Youth unemployment: more than 70% [the highest percentage in Europe]
- Significant Environmental problems due to PPC lignite mining

+ The characteristic of the region is the energy production from lignite

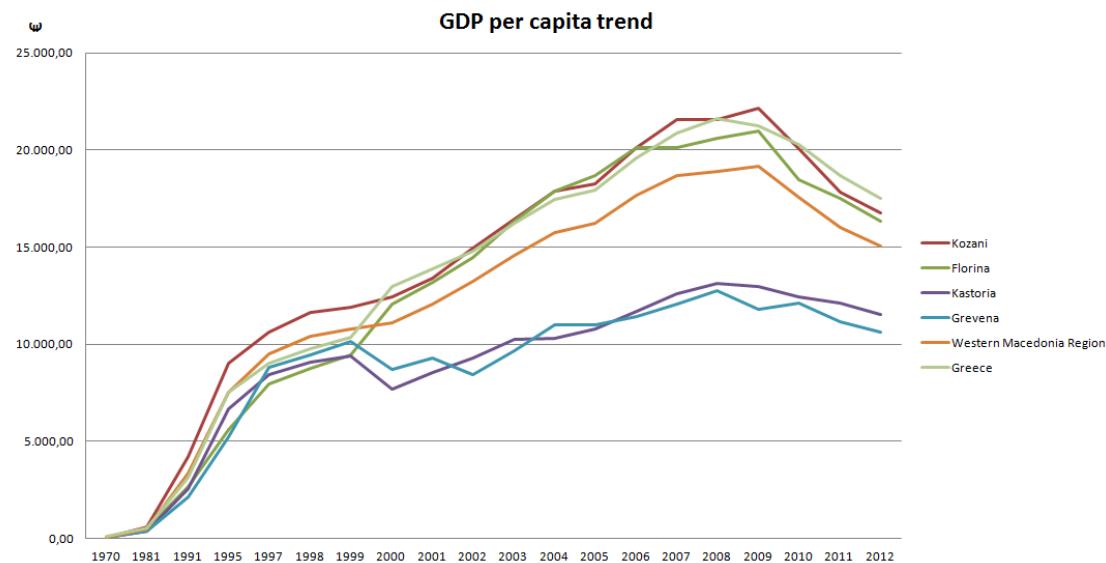




The past:



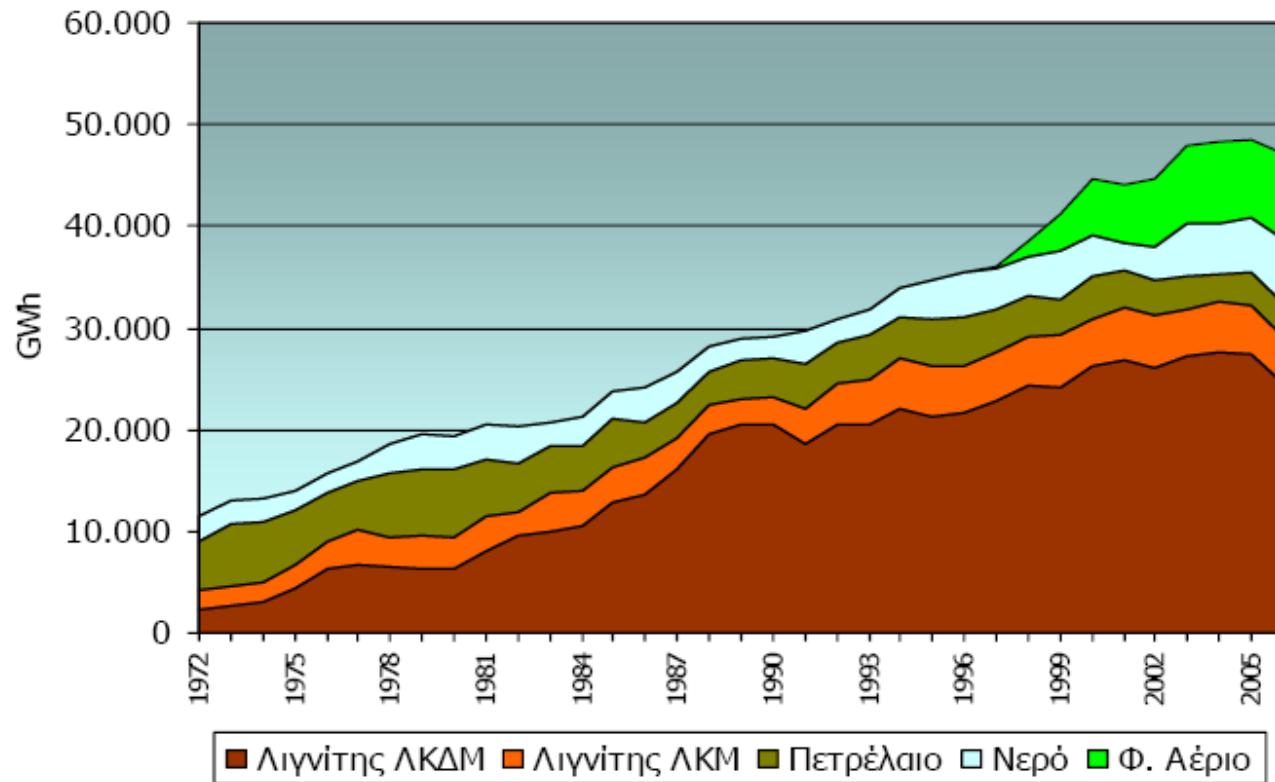
- First power plants in 1950'.
- The exploitation of lignite was a necessity to electrification and the development of the country after the war .
- The exploitation of lignite since then, changed the character of the region, economically, socially and environmentally.





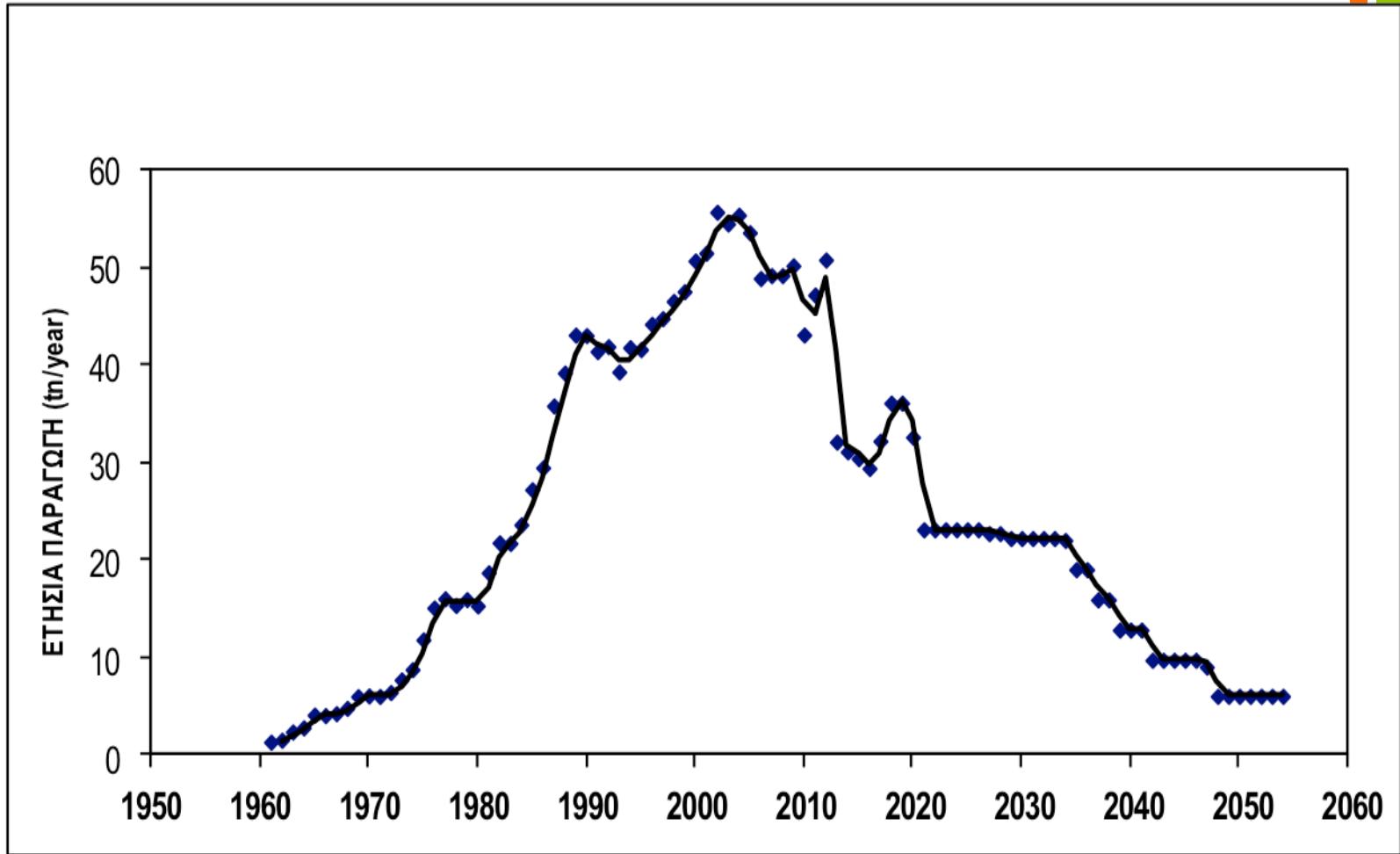
Παραγωγή Ηλεκτρικής Ενέργειας στην Ελλάδα ανά Καύσιμο

(Διασυνδεδεμένο Σύστημα)





Annual coal production





The consequences:

- According to calculations by TEE W. Macedonia, the withdrawal of 300 MW lignite power, will deprive 83 mil. Euro from the local economy annually and cause loss of 1559 direct and indirect jobs.
- Also, according to ELSTAT data analysis by the Development Company of Western Macedonia (ANKO), the gross value added from the business of mining - power and which is located in the Regional Units (EE) for Kozani and Florina the year 2011 totaled 1,360 million. €, (contribution to 45,35% and 34,49% in AP of both EE, respectively), while the corresponding employment in mining - power amounted to approximately 6,000 jobs. It is emphasized that the W. Macedonia and especially the “energy prefectures” already have the highest unemployment rates nationwide.
- According to WWF’s “Roadmap for the Transition of the Western Macedonia Region to a post-lignite era” :the planned withdrawal of 3,500 MW lignite plants operating in the region will lead to a loss of 6128 jobs and 1.14 billion euro local income.





The ecological crisis in the region.



- In the region there is a productive monoculture with lignite and its exploitation having the dominant role
- Important are also the environmental consequences in the region :
 - Air pollution
 - Effects on health
 - Destruction of the aquifer
 - Change in terrain
 - The region is experiencing a crisis that is economic, social and environmental!



The next day{?}

Another way is possible!



- Post lignite era is here for years, but finds us unprepared
- There is a need for the elaboration of a comprehensive and agreed strategic plan for post lignite era.
- It requires the cooperation of all actors, specific timetables and specific funding ,
- Exploiting European experience and the example of other regions in Europe faced similar challenges.



At European level:

It is essential that the European Union, which makes important decisions to decarbonise the European economy, to leave no region without the necessary support! I believe that the EU should build a support framework for all regions. This support will aim both at providing the necessary know-how to local and national players, but will also provide the necessary funding for the interventions and projects required both from the current program and from the next programs. The COAL PLATFORM initiative has already begun by the European Commission, Western Macedonia is one of the four pilot regions. Today, in a time when the European Union's vision is being challenged and the confidence of European citizens decreases, it is a first-time opportunity for the EU. to show solidarity in the regions that supported the development of the European economy, but today they are exposed to the necessary changes that are being made in European energy policy.





At National Level:

Speaking about my country, what needs to be done mainly is to coordinate transition policies at national level. For over 60 years, my region has supported the growth and electrification of all of Greece. A country destroyed after the double war of 1940 - 1949. These regions can not now be left to their own destiny. The transition must be apart from a

local case a national affair. The West Macedonia due to lignite monoculture and productive distortions was in crisis before the crisis in our country in 2010, and today there is the danger that a country will emerge from the economic crisis that has been suffering for almost 8 years, but our region will sink more into it. Two years ago, the 5 Mayors participating in the Greek Energy Network have requested from the Greek Government, some of the proceeds of the CO₂ emissions auction, to head to our regions to support employment and create new jobs. Although our request was not accepted, we will come back next. We also expect the national energy plan to be completed within the next few months, which is necessary to follow the next planning that should be done locally!



The proposal of the 5 Mayors of energy Municipalities



- Request for payment of the revenue share from auctioning CO₂ emission allowances for job creation in three lignite prefectures.
- The government revenues from auctioning emissions allowances is expected to reach 6 billion euros in the next decade, ie 600 million euros a year on average.
- Energy Municipalities claim a 20% share of the revenues.
- This setting will be discussed in the context of the parallel program.



At a local level,



I believe that a comprehensive, structured and inclusive dialogue involving all local actors should be made and that will help, firstly: To make everyone aware that the transition is now a reality, that we are leading to an economy with limited dependence on coal and that we need to act urgently and decisively. Second: Start a comprehensive planning for the next day, based on the international experience and the characteristics of the area (eg the West Macedonia has great potential in the development of aromatic plants and alternative tourism).

+ The strategy for the transition should fulfil the following specified three main axes:

- Strengthening of business activities and enrichment of the region's productive baseline with innovative and competitive activities.
- Capacity building and human resource skills development in areas directly linked to the region's potentially productive environment.
- Protection, promotion and enhancement of the natural and human environment and development of favourable living conditions.

The most promising identified sectors of regional economy growth are agriculture and processing of farm products, construction emphasizing in energy efficiency and energy savings, RES and services focused in tourism.

The estimated cost of this strategy is raised between 2 and 4 billion euros, depending on the final structure of the regional economic model.

Immediate actions should be taken due to programmed termination of operation of 6 lignite units in 2020, having effects to 12,000 jobs in the local society



Epilogue



In conclusion, the transition of the regions from coal requires interventions and initiatives at many levels at the same time. Local, National and Main European Level. The challenge, as highlighted from of the numbers, is enormous and the absolutely necessary transition of the European economy to a zero-emission co₂ regime should be made, without sacrificing the current and future generations of people in carbon areas. Carbon reliance should be an opportunity and not a threat for the regions to transform their productive model into an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable way.