



16th Meeting of the Eastern Partnership Platform 3 on Energy Security 20 December 2016, Brussels, Belgium

Meeting Report

Summary:

The 16th meeting of Platform 3 on Energy Security of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) took place in Brussels on 20 December 2016. The meeting gathered again a high number of participants from partner countries and from EU Member States as well as from other European entities.

In the opening part, the European Commission informed on the main political developments in the EaP and on the progress on the European Energy Union, notably the Clean Energy for all package. Under the section “Regional energy cooperation” participants were debriefed on the inception phase of the regional energy programme EU4Energy and the Covenant of Mayors East - Phase II.

The thematic session dealt with energy efficiency linking to the Paris Agreement objectives and to the Clean Energy for all package which the Commission adopted on 30 November. The Commission briefed participants on the progress and challenges for energy efficiency in the EU and the Eastern partners presented their progress and challenges of energy efficiency particularly in the building sector with a focus on heating and cooling. Participants were also informed on synergies between energy and innovation and research related activities and programmes like SPIRE, and supporting programmes and facilities like E5P and SE4ALL.

Finally, participants were updated on the progress of the studies being carried out under the Quality Studies to support the Activities under the EaP (HiQSTEP).

All PowerPoint presentations given during the meeting and other related documents are available on the following web-page: <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/node/2710>

1. Opening session

The meeting was chaired by **Ms Mechthild Wörzdörfer**, Director for Energy Policy and **Mr Hans van Steen**, Head of Unit for International Relations and Enlargement at DG Energy, European Commission.

In her introduction, **Ms Wörzdörfer** referred to the positive developments in energy cooperation with all Eastern partner countries at bilateral and at regional level. She underlined the need to focus on concrete deliverables to be presented at the next EaP Summit and the positive impact on the citizens



to be communicated effectively. Focal areas for the Summit will be notably energy interconnectivity and energy efficiency. Energy efficiency being a major focus of the package of suggested energy legislation that the European Commission has presented on 30 November with the view to further implement the Energy Union Ms Wörsdörfer briefly summarised the main components of these proposals. She stressed the need to improve energy security thereby increasing energy resilience in EU Member States and in Eastern partner countries alike.

Mr Boris Iarochvitch, Head of Division for the EaP, Regional Cooperation and OECD at the European External Action Service (EEAS) recapitulated briefly the most recent political developments in the EaP while looking forward to the next EaP Summit to be held in November 2017. He highlighted the continued importance the Commission and the Council attribute to the energy security and pointed out a new Joint Staff working document on the EaP Summit deliverables which focuses on the 4 Riga priorities (economic development and market opportunities; strengthening institutions and good governance; connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change; mobility and people-to-people contacts) and 20 key deliverables which will act as a work plan for the next phase of the EaP until 2020. He further stressed the significant progress made at the last EU-Ukraine Summit on 24 November with the signature of a new Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Energy Partnership with Ukraine and looked forward to the official launching of negotiations with Azerbaijan in 2017 for a new comprehensive agreement. Finally, he reflected on a new trade and energy coordination group with Belarus.

2. Regional Energy Cooperation

The new regional energy cooperation programme **EU4Energy** is focused on evidence-based energy policies, the improved use of statistics and sharing of best practice and EU experience. The budget is 20 million EUR for the time period 2016-2020. This collaborative programme is implemented by the International Energy Agency, the Energy Community and Energy Charter secretariats. EU4Energy and its different components were jointly presented by **Mr Vassilis Maragos**, Head of Unit responsible for the overall management and coordination of the action in DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, **Mr Duarte Figueira** from the IEA, **Mrs Svitlana Karpyskhyna** from the Energy Community Secretariat and **Mrs Bilyana Chobanova** from the Charter Secretariat. Mr Maragos outlined that the programme should develop into a dynamic policy dialogue, also in connection to the 2020 deliverables and stressed the importance of the partner countries' commitments to individual action plans, thus, improving communication of individual and specific needs to achieve individual energy and climate change related energy targets including on energy efficiency. He further stressed the necessity of appointing country coordinators to improve the network and visibility of the programme. Mr Figueira presented the objectives of the components under IEA responsibility and informed participants of the main activities foreseen for 2017, which are based on consultation with all countries covered by this programme. This first year will focus on i) data, including strategies, production, capacity building and demand side data collection; ii) country assessments, developing roadmaps and peer reviews; and iii) the creation of a web portal for policy makers which will allow partner countries to access necessary data to develop robust energy policies. Mrs Karpyskhyna and Mrs Chobanova outlined draft work programmes for their respective geographical responsibilities including the possibilities of technical assistance, such as working groups, studies etc. on the legislative and regulatory framework both bilaterally and on a regional level. Both highlighted the individual key priorities for the different partner countries up to 2020 based on three major topics, i.e. electricity and gas interconnectivity; energy efficiency and renewables and governance. In order to make this programme a success, all speakers called upon partner countries to take pro-active ownership and to make use of existing synergies.

Mr Maragos confirmed that the new **Covenant of Mayors East** (CoMO East) launched its second phase in October 2016. He pointed out the alignment with the objective of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement on climate change. He invited partner countries to claim ownership of the project. He announced a new round of Call for Proposals to be launched in the first quarter of 2017, making EUR 10 million grants available for municipalities in the Eastern partner countries for the implementation of their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans.

During the **discussion** participants stressed the importance of these programmes and in particular information exchange, such as on methods for scaling up investment, the multiplier effects of the EU's energy efficiency and renewable policies. Participants also discussed the important role of civil society involvement and transparency in the EU4Energy programme.

3. Thematic Session: Energy Efficiency (revised work programme 2014-2017, Activity 3)

The objective of this thematic session was to exchange information and learn about the developments in the area of energy efficiency in the EU and in the Eastern partner countries. In addition, synergies were sought on the work between Platform 3 and the EaP Panel on “Innovation and research” in order to break up the thematic silos within the setup of the EaP.

Mr Paul Hodson, Head of Unit responsible for energy efficiency in DG Energy informed participants on the progress and challenges in energy efficiency developments in the EU. He highlighted that the EU, as confirmed in the new winter package, sees energy efficiency as a domestic source of energy, which can strongly contribute to energy security and to reach the individual Paris commitments of concerned states. He further stressed that with the decoupling of GDP growth from energy consumption since 2006 the EU proved that energy efficiency and other related measures do not harm the economic growth but on the contrary add possibilities for employment and growth. He also explored the reasons for the EU's successful energy efficiency policies and highlighted that although behavioural change is important, product policies have had so far the greatest impact in the short and medium term. Having achieved this, the EU will now strongly focus on the energy performance of buildings, finance for new technological and Information Communications Technology (ICT) (i.e. demand-side response, smart appliances).

All Eastern partner countries gave a good and comprehensive overview on how their national energy efficiency policies in the building sector developed, what their current policies are and presented policies in the making. Detailed information can be found in the publically available presentations¹. While it became clear that countries are at different stages in the energy efficiency development, all are committed to further strengthen their efforts in the development of domestic energy efficiency for the sake of energy security and in order to boost domestic economy. For that, capacity building, more efficient energy technology and financial investment are issues on which there is interest to work with the EU and the existing tools and instruments. In order to have citizens on board, partners would appreciate assistance in developing and implementing a good communication strategy. Enhanced regional cooperation in that area was mentioned by several partner countries as an important element.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/node/2710>

Mr Anders Lund, Associate Director for the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership (**E5P**) at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development provided an update on the recent developments and extension of the partnership. The multi-donor fund is currently used mostly in Ukraine, but since the EaP Summit in Riga of 2015, it is also accessible to Armenia, Georgia and Moldova. In 2017 it will be for Belarus. Azerbaijan was encouraged to also consider participation. The partnership focuses on energy efficiency and environmental projects to create win-win-win situations (economy, social, and environment). A particularity of the fund is that also the recipient country invests and works on legislative measures, which are then supported by the fund.

Mr Andrea Carignani di Novoli, Head of Unit for “European Neighbourhood Policy, Africa and the Gulf” in the DG for Research and Innovation informed on the activities of the **Panel “Innovation and Research”** under EaP Platform 2 and he elaborated on **possible synergies** between research and innovation and energy. He stressed in particular the cooperation possibilities within the framework of Horizon 2020 where energy, and in particular energy efficiency, renewables and climate change are a top priority. He encouraged partner countries to participate in the programme and highlighted some of the possible options of support.

Mr Soren Bowadt, responsible for the Public Private Partnership (PPP) “**Sustainable Process Industry through Resource and Energy Efficiency**” (**SPIRE**) within DG for Research and Innovation provided information on the PPP. SPIRE is a contractual PPP under Horizon 2020 and focuses on resource efficiency particularly in industrial use. It is in high demand from the industry including from SMEs. It mostly funds non-Members and their circular economy initiatives linked to energy and resource efficiency. He encouraged participants to communicate topics for future calls to better respond to the stakeholder's needs.

Mrs Anca Simion from DG International Cooperation and Development presented the **EU Technical Assistance Facility for the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL)**. The flexible demand-driven project (8.6 million EUR) aims at catalysing reforms by providing technical assistance, although not for infrastructure projects, but in their preparation such as through studies, field trips, workshops etc. It will run until December 2018.

During the **discussion** participants reflected on the chances energy efficiency provides to the economy in terms of growth and employment, bankability of projects, tax designs to support energy efficiency measures and welcomed the process of finding synergies with the EaP panel on research and innovation. Again, the importance of fact based impact analysis and effective communication was stressed in order to provide convincing arguments to governmental entities to engage in energy efficiency measures.

4. Work in Progress - next steps

Finally, **Mr Przemyslaw Musialkowski**, Team Leader of the High Quality Studies for the EaP (HiQSTEP) gave an overview on the progress of the approved studies and made additional suggestions while highlighting that the facility will end in January 2018. Additional studies can still be funded, for instance with the view to support the works on EU4Energy. Works would have to start in May 2017 at the latest. **Ms Keterini Sardi**, HiQSTEP key expert for energy, informed on the progress and challenges on the roof top solar study in its 3 components. The final report can be expected by June 2017.

5. Conclusion

Mr van Steen briefly summarized the different meeting sessions and underlined the continued importance of energy efficiency as well as the potential to find further synergies between the different platforms and their panels. He announced that possibly a specific platform event will be held in order to follow-up on identifying a pipeline for future regional interconnection projects and that the planning for the yearly workshop of EaP energy regulators in cooperation with the Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) is well on its way. He further stressed the need to start preparing the next multiannual work programme, which may well continue to focus on the current challenges and priorities. Further suggestions from partner countries would nonetheless be welcome, also as regards the structure of the work.

The Chair thanked the participants for their active participation and the various speakers and colleagues for their respective contributions and he encouraged partner countries to share feedback and ideas for future cooperation and topics for the platform meeting or other events. The next meeting will take place in May/June 2017.

Enclosures: Agenda, participants list