

EU ENLARGEMENT FACTSHEET

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ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

THE EU ENERGY, CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

The **Europe 2020 strategy** aims to deliver growth that is smart, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation; sustainable, thanks to a decisive move towards a low-carbon economy; and inclusive, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction. It includes the climate and energy targets for 2020 with three key objectives:

- A 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels;
- Raising the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%;
- A 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.

Energy production from fossil fuels is one of the main causes of climate change and environmental degradation. Countries are still heavily dependent on fossil fuels and coal in particular, along with outdated and inefficient generation capacity. Other sectors, such as agriculture and industry, also contribute to environmental degradation and climate change. Climate change and environmental problems represent major threats for the human health and safety, for the quality of life, for the sustainable development and economic growth. The adverse impacts of environmental deterioration and climate change, e.g. increased average temperatures, water stress, extreme weather events like heat waves, droughts, forest fires, heavy rain and snow, storms and floods, etc., are becoming more frequent or more intense in the enlargement region.

Countries wishing to join the EU need to comply with EU standards in the areas of energy, climate action

and environmental protection. If well planned and implemented, EU energy, environment and climate policies will bring significant benefits to the economies and citizens in the enlargement countries. These policies contribute to the creation of jobs, the generation of "green" growth and a strengthening of Europe's competitiveness. The benefits to human health and safety are obvious, particularly when EU standards are met for air quality, drinking water, bathing water, waste management and recycling, nature protection, chemicals control, noise management, floods, industrial accidents management, civil protection (against disasters) etc.

KEY CHALLENGES IN THE ENLARGEMENT REGION

There are **key challenges** in these areas:

- **Legal:** the national legislation needs to be aligned (by the date of accession) with over 200 EU legal acts covering the environment and climate change.
- **Administrative:** national institutions must be adapted and strengthened to be able to implement and enforce the EU legislation.
- **Financial:** important investments are required to ensure strong institutional set-ups, to establish and modernize the facilities, technologies and infrastructure in environment and climate change fields.

Technical assistance, capacity building and investment activities in the fields of environmental protection and climate action should be complemented by awareness-raising and regional cooperation activities in order to increase transparency and maximize their effectiveness and social support.

KEY PRIORITIES



Horizontal Legislation

This is a cross-sectoral part of the EU environmental standards which needs to be fully implemented by the date of accession. It includes major pieces of legislation related *inter alia* to environmental impact and strategic environmental assessments, public participation in the decision-making process, access to information on environmental matters, environmental crime and environmental liability.



Air Quality

The main challenges and priorities in this area are: reducing emissions from stationary sources such as power plants, local district heating installations and industrial production and addressing growing traffic pollution in the cities.

As an example of EU support, the IPA project "Supply and Installation of Equipment for the Air Monitoring System in Kosovo*" addresses the problem in and around populated areas by installing air quality monitoring equipment across the whole territory.



Water Quality

The main challenges and priorities in this area are: optimising the water management, urban wastewater treatment and improving the quality of the drinking water and sewage systems.

As an example of EU support, through IPA, the water authorities in Hungary and Serbia embarked on a new assessment of the River Tisza in order to improve river management and flood-prevention. A total of EUR 660,806 was spent between 2010 and 2012. Also, IPA helps with the construction of a sewage system and wastewater treatment plant in the Velipoja area in Albania. The EU has contributed EUR 10.5 million to the ongoing project.



Waste Management

The main challenges and priorities in this area are: managing of public, industrial and dangerous waste so as to meet the EU standards, implementation of a strategy on the recycling of waste and the sustainable use of resources.



Nature Protection

"Natura 2000" is an EU-wide network that aims to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. The definition and designation of the protected sites needs to be completed by the date of accession.



Industrial pollution and risk management

The Directive on Industrial Emissions concerns thousands of firms and installations in the enlargement region, and large-scale investments are needed to be made compliant with the EU requirements.



Civil Protection

The priority of EU cooperation in the field of civil protection is to provide better protection for people, their environment, property and cultural heritage in the event of major natural or manmade disasters. Technical and material resources need to be enhanced, in particular by further equipping and training civil protection staff to reach a sound basis for adequate support in case of emergencies.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



Climate Action

The main priorities in the area of climate action are: alignment with and implementation of EU legislation to raise the share of energy consumption produced by renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar and biomass; increasing energy efficiency; development of carbon capture and storage technologies to trap and store CO₂ emitted by power stations and other major industrial installations; reducing CO₂ emissions from new cars and vans, mainstreaming climate into other policies etc.

HOW THE EU SUPPORTS THESE KEY AREAS

The EU supports countries wishing to join in their efforts to meet EU environment and climate change standards by:

- **Explaining the EU environmental and climate change legislation** to stakeholders during numerous technical and ministerial meetings

- **Monitoring of progress** towards alignment with and implementation of the environmental and climate change *acquis*, by using progress reports
- **Supporting regional cooperation**, through RENA and TAIEX programmes:

The **Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA)** programme aims to enhance regional environment and climate change cooperation in the Western Balkans and Turkey and to help them in the prospect of accession. RENA had positive results in terms of exchange of best practices, information and establishment of cooperation networks. The EU organised numerous trainings, workshops and study visits and financed a monitoring process during the years. RENA was concluded in March 2013 and is anticipated to be followed up by the Environmental and Climate

be followed up by the Environmental and Climate Regional Accession Network (ECRAN).

The **Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX)** programme provides technical training, advice and peer assistance to stakeholders of the enlargement region. The main beneficiary groups are civil servants working in public administrations at national, regional and local levels.

- The EU's **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)** financially supports investments and strengthening administrative capacity in all the key areas.

