

Advancing the EU Climate and Energy Policy Agenda in the context of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU policy conference

Date: 25 June 2024, 9:00-15:40

Venue: Budapest room, Hotel Benczur, 35 Benczur street, 1068 Budapest, Hungary

From 1 July 2024, Hungary holds the Presidency of the Council of the EU. This will be a very special period: a new European Parliament will be elected and probably also a new European Commission designed. Their agenda for the upcoming 5 years will be discussed and possibly set. For the Hungarian Presidency this situation presents an opportunity to not only facilitate the current EU policy developments and debates but also to propose own initiatives and approaches. Taking into account that it will be Poland to take the Presidency over for the first half of 2025 it would be useful to focus on the Central Eastern European perspectives for the EU climate and energy policies and discussions. This includes communicating the socio-economic co-benefits of enhanced action, address citizens' concerns about rising costs of living, and enabling their participation in a just energy transition.

Chairperson: Alexa Botár, NSC-FoE Hungary (MTVSZ), co-moderators of panels: Seda Orhan and Kasia Ugryn, CAN Europe

8:30 – 8:55 Registration, welcome coffee

9:00 – 9:15 Opening – **Mátyás Maksi**, Deputy Head of Representation, European Commission Representation in Hungary

9:15 – 9:30 Welcome address – **Robert Zeßner**, Head of Economic Unit, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Hungary

9:30 – 11:00 **Panel 1: Advantages and benefits of adequate climate action – how can climate policy work for the people?**

The European Union has set its climate neutrality target for 2050 and developed a comprehensive policy framework for the 2030 milestone – upcoming implementation of the Fit for 55 and REPowerEU packages at the national levels will be crucial for the decarbonisation pathways of particular Member States as well as for the entire EU.

- *How to create a bridge between short term (2030) and long term (2050) perspectives, ensuring adequate transition trajectories and build a decarbonised society, which does not leave anyone behind? What can we learn from [CAN Europe's report](#) on the co-benefits of Paris Agreement-compatible climate action? What steps, milestones lead to climate neutrality?*
- *What are the benefits of multilevel participatory planning in climate policy and how to ensure this is applied i.a. to the review of the national long-term strategies?*

Speakers:

- **Dr. Barbara Botos**, Hungary's Ambassador at Large for Climate: The international and European mitigation and adaptation framework
- **Dana Marekova**, Co-Founder and Coordinator of Climate Coalition Slovakia: How (not) to talk about benefits of climate action in CEE?

Panel discussion with moderated Q&A with participants. Short oral contribution on CAN Europe's Co-benefits report by **Kasia Ugryn**, CAN Europe

11:00 – 11:30

Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00

Panel 2: Between NECPs to Social Climate Plans – how to enhance governance and ownership in well-targeted planning?

By the end of June 2024, the EU Member States are supposed to deliver their final updated NECPs, and in December the European Commission is expected to release its final overall assessment of these plans – that will build a guide towards the crucial 2030 milestone. In parallel there is an obligation to draft the Social Climate Plans by mid-2025 that should be aligned with the NECPs but also to analyse much deeper the social needs to be addressed to ensure a proper protection of the groups (potentially) most affected by the energy and / or transport poverty, and also create mechanism for a just distribution.

- *What governance principles, methods and participatory processes ensure that SCPs are designed to benefit the most vulnerable ones?*
- *How can the NECP update process feed into the SCP planning process? What are the lessons learned from the NECP drafting process? How to build a coherent link between climate&energy and social policies?*

Speakers:

- **Viktor Horváth**, Deputy State Secretary for Energy Transition, Ministry for Energy: The Hungarian NECP
- **Štěpán Vizi**, Climate policy Expert, Centre for Transport and Energy (CDE), Czechia: Lessons learned and recommendations from the NECP and SCP drafting processes in Czechia

Panel discussion with moderated Q&A with participants. Short oral contribution on the NGO aspects of the Social Climate Plan by **Jakub Sokołowski**, Researcher, Institute for Structural Research, Poland

13:00 – 13:45 Lunch

13:45 – 15:15 **Panel 3: Renewables for the Citizens in the CEE: Future of the Electricity Markets and Infrastructure**

Distributed energy production and sharing contributes significantly to energy security and reduces costs of energy for consumers. In this context, the electricity grids are becoming the core of the renewable energy development discussions – as in many countries, also in CEE, the numbers of energy prosumers are rising, the systems face the need of curtailments and / or system operators do not allow new actors to connect to the grids.

- *How to consolidate grid development and renewables-based electricity generation? What are the specific tendencies, priorities and challenges in the CEE region?*
- *How to ensure energy sharing for active consumers and energy communities?*

Speakers:

- **Jenő Berda**, Head of Electricity Infrastructure Unit, Ministry of Energy, Hungary: Status and regulation of distributed electricity production, challenges and goals
- **Marta Anczewska**, Energy Policy Coordinator, Climate Action Network Europe: Overview of new EU regulations regarding energy markets (latest Market Design reform), and recommendations for the implementation, with special focus on grids development

Panel discussion with moderated Q&A with participants. Short oral contribution on the V4 community energy aspects by **Bence Kovács**, community energy expert, NSC-FoE Hungary

15:15 – 15:40 Conclusions, closing

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