Regionalisation of EU energy policies¹
Effective Regional Energy Policy Cooperation in South East Europe

Project Description

The implementation of Regional Energy Policy Initiatives is among European Commission’s priorities in achieving EU energy and climate goals and establishing an Energy Union. In light of the region-specific challenges faced by some member states and the different partnerships needed to coordinate a regional approach to energy policies formulation, the project will examine the political and economic justification to pursue cross-EU border approaches, specifically in terms of the cooperation potential in South East Europe between Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Turkey and the Western Balkans’ states, i.e. cooperation between EU member states and countries, which are member of the European Energy Community.

Report:
Effective Regional Energy Policy Cooperation in South East Europe: A Proposal, by Christian Egenhofer, Anna Dimitrova, Julian Popov
http://www.ceps.eu/publications/effective-regional-energy-policy-cooperation-south-east-europe-proposal

This report identifies the seven key elements that need to be addressed to bring existing and planned regional energy policy cooperation initiatives in South East Europe to life: i) a sound geographical definition, ii) a governance structure, iii) voluntary participation, iv) exchange of information and best practice, v) the development of an external dimension, vi) regional infrastructure planning and development and vii) streamlining the financing instruments across the region. The study finds that significant progress has been made in many areas, and makes concrete proposals to unlock the full potential of coordination in those areas where there is limited progress. These proposals have been tested in discussions in the region.

Events:
Unlocking South East European Energy Potential through Regional Cooperation, 3rd-4th of June 2015. Sofia, Bulgaria
Final Conclusions and Conference Declaration:
http://www.ceps.eu/sites/default/files/Final%20Conclusions.pdf

Issue Paper on Regional Energy Policy Initiatives:

¹ For more details: http://ech.com/project/regionalisation-eu-energy-policies / http://www.ceps.eu/content/Regionalisation-of-EU-energy-policies
**Project Timeline:**

As part of the project, series of activities funded by the European Climate Foundation were carried out by CEPS to explore the potential of regional approaches to European energy policies. Through them we asked whether regional approaches could improve the effectiveness of EU energy policy objectives through enhanced policy coordination at regional scale.

CEPS launched the “Regional Energy Policy Initiatives” project with a workshop held in Brussels on January 20, 2015 attracting a broad base of participants. Representatives of MEDREG and the Pentalateral Forum, forms of regional energy cooperation initiatives, presented their experiences along with the institutional view of the European Commission, MEP Claude Turmes, South East Europe stakeholders and representatives of relevant industries (electricity infrastructure).

After the workshop, a summary of discussions was drafted and circulated. On March 11, 2015 a breakfast meeting with Christian Egenhofer was hosted by MEP Claude Turmes in the European Parliament, Strasbourg to discuss the potential for regional energy policy cooperation in South East Europe with interested MEPs.

The project was discussed in series of bilateral meetings, held in the region (Greece, Bulgaria and Austria) in parallel to several conferences and fora. In particular, it was presented at the Balkan Forum in Thessaloniki, Greece by Anna Dimitrova and Julian Popov. Following this, a policy proposal on an EU framework on Regional Energy Policy Cooperation Initiatives is being drafted. The proposal will be presented at a regional event to be organised in June. A breakfast meeting was held in CEPS on May 5th to discuss the outcomes of the works hop with government representatives from the region.

On June 3-4th in Sofia, Bulgaria CEPS, with the support of the Bulgarian government, organised a workshop on regional cooperation. The event aimed at initiating dialogue between governmental representatives from the region of South East Europe on the potential benefits of regional cooperation in the field of energy policies. The gains to be anticipated as a result of coordinated and cooperative approach to energy policies in the region were discussed with a specific attention to several topics: natural gas and electricity markets, electricity generation, renewables deployment and energy efficiency. This allowed participants to express concerns as well as share information on the prospects to use existing cross-border initiatives to advance regional energy policy cooperation.

Discussions focused on the mechanisms for regional cooperation in the field of energy policies in light of EU’s energy objectives (Energy Union) and national and regional energy interests in South East Europe. The summary of conclusions reached at the event can be found [here](#).

The discussion to be held in the European Parliament on September 30th will be to discuss regional cooperation in South East Europe in light of current proposals for an Energy Union governance structure. While endowed with promising potential, the region of South East Europe underutilises its indigenous energy resources. A main reason for this is the lack of effective regional cooperation among EU and non-EU members. Governance under the emerging Energy Union can help address this obstacle and regional cooperation is a key element of this process.