

Conclusions of the delegates of the regional meeting

“Energy Efficiency Policies in the Balkans¹: Opportunities for Regional Cooperation”,

15 September 2014,

Tirana, Albania

Bearing in mind the Final Declaration by the Chair of the Conference on the Western Balkans, Berlin, 28 August 2014 and sharing the objectives of the Energy Community Treaty and EU Energy Efficiency Directives, delegates agree to following conclusions:

1. Regional cooperation in energy efficiency could bring direct benefits to citizens by increasing employment, reducing energy bills, improving living standards and creating better living environment.
2. Measures to increase energy efficiency are a significant opportunity for economic development and stronger economic growth.
3. Energy savings and use of local clean energy resources can make the Balkans less dependent on energy imports and increase the energy security of the region.
4. Effective political dialogue would ensure better coordination among countries and create a more unified voice in the region, consequently leading to improvement of economic and political relations.
5. Financial mechanisms need to be made known and available to regional actors. The region should develop an overall action plan, including the development of financial instruments that will offer variety of funding solutions for energy efficiency projects throughout the region. Funding solutions should be developed through cooperation of governments, national and international financial institutions, taking into consideration the specifics of each country.
6. South East Europe should accelerate the process of development of a properly integrated regional electricity and gas markets and build adequate energy infrastructure to facilitate the energy markets, as these are crucial for promotion of supply-side energy efficiency, security of supply and climate goals.
7. Promotion of private investment and creation of the harmonised market for energy efficiency at the regional level will accelerate the development and implementation of regional energy efficiency projects.

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey

8. In order to complement and make the most of the efforts of the EU, a more active regional approach and a better coordinated regional representation on issues of energy cooperation is needed. A common regional energy policy voice would help in development of more locally appropriate energy efficiency, sustainable energy generation and cogeneration, as well as infrastructure projects.
9. Public and local government participation in the design and implementation of energy efficiency policies is required in order to change the public perception on energy usage and energy efficiency of the region.
10. Countries in the region should involve education and research institutions in order to advance the understanding of the wide benefits improved energy efficiency could bring.
11. Governments, civil and business society and the donor community working in the region should set up a regional taskforce that will examine concrete problems and offer analysis and solutions for energy saving.
12. In order to advance the energy efficiency cooperation in the region a better governmental and donor coordination needs to be established.
13. Regional exchange of best practices regarding promotion of energy efficiency policy is needed.
14. The region should work on improving the efficiency of power generation, cogeneration, transmission and distribution, which is in compliance with Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU.
15. Energy efficiency measures should be strongly promoted as beneficial for local jobs creation, as they use local labour and mostly locally produced materials supporting in that way further the development of the local economies.
16. Local financial institutions need greater human resources capacity in order to review and assess projects and loan applications. Such process would create more jobs in the region.
17. Countries in the region should cooperate closely in advancing the trend of integration of renewable energy sources into new buildings and building renovation.
18. Countries in the Balkan region should actively contribute to the European Energy Union development process and inclusion of its principles of stronger emphasis on support for accelerated energy efficiency improvement.