

Meeting of Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum

Minutes

6 December 2022, hybrid

1. Opening statements

The Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum was opened by Ms Inna Sovsun, Chair of Subcommittee on European Integration and Member of the Committee on Energy, Housing and Utilities Services of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, on behalf of the Ukrainian Energy Community Presidency 2022.

Mr Morten Petersen, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy of the European Parliament delivered opening remarks. Mr Petersen briefed participants to the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum about the ongoing work of the European Parliament in the electricity and gas sector, emphasizing actions and activities aimed at addressing the energy price surge and its impacts.

Mr Artur Lorkowski, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat, outlined concrete actions that the Energy Community has undertaken to ensure affordable, secure and sustainable energy for citizens in the Energy Community Contracting Parties. This includes the adoption of the Gas Storage Regulation, which will strengthen security of gas supply in time for this winter. He underscored that the current crisis presents an opportunity to accelerate the energy transition and advance European energy market integration. He also briefed members of the Plenum on the new electricity market package to make the region better integrated with the EU and the 2030 energy and climate targets to be adopted by the December 2022 Ministerial Council.

2. Exchange of views on energy prices and security of supply

The exchange of views focused on the situation in the energy sector of the Energy Community Contracting Parties in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine, serious concerns about security of energy supply and the unprecedented rise in energy prices. The Plenum discussed how to address the impacts of the price surge and ensure energy affordability for citizens under the framework of the Energy Community.

Each country delegation briefed the Plenum about the state of national energy and climate sector reforms and specific measures that were implemented to address the energy crisis and energy affordability for citizens.

The Plenum underlined that while many Contracting Parties operated in a state of emergency and put in place regulatory measures, it was important to ensure that these measures did not turn into obstacles for the energy transition and sustainable energy sector reforms. Measures to address energy poverty and help energy vulnerable consumers through the crisis were at the centre of the discussion. Fast-tracking efficiency programmes was highlighted as key.

The Plenum underlined that dialogue between legislators is necessary to ensure Europe's security of supply, create markets conducive to energy from renewable sources and ensure energy affordability to vulnerable households. In the current context, it is more important than ever to work together to cut dependence on fossil fuels and replace Russian gas supplies with sustainable energy.

3. Concluding remarks

The Parliamentary Plenum highlighted the importance of the Energy Community in terms of creating a solid regional framework for strengthening energy security in Europe and stressed that continued cooperation under the umbrella of the Energy Community was key to tackling the current energy crisis. When it comes to energy security, close collaboration between the Energy Community Contracting Parties and the EU is paramount.

The Plenum also touched upon upcoming challenges such as the implementation of carbon pricing in the Energy Community Contracting Parties and readiness for the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). The importance of implementation of the Gas Storage Regulation in the Energy Community Contracting Parties in terms of strengthening European security of supply was reiterated.

It was underlined that there will be no security of supply in Europe until Ukraine wins the war. Ukraine already received significant support from its partners but more support is needed for Ukraine to get through the winter. The Secretariat's Ukraine Support Task Force and the Ukraine Energy Support Fund, established upon request of the European Commission and in agreement with the Ministry of Energy of Ukraine, were making a critical contribution to help Ukraine repair and restore Ukraine's civilian energy infrastructure.

4. The Plenum Meeting took place back-to-back to a workshop which outlined ongoing Energy Community initiatives to advance the just energy transition and the key role of Parliaments in advancing this process, organized jointly with the Green Parliamentary Groups from the Western Balkans in cooperation with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Members: Arben Pellumbi (Albania), Helidon Bushati (Albania), Maia Bitadze (Georgia), David Songulashvili (Georgia), Mimoza Kusari – Lila (Kosovo*), Victor Spînu (Moldova), Roman Roşca (Moldova), Jovanka Bogavac (Montenegro), Dragica Sekulic (Montenegro), Laze Tanevski (North Macedonia), Zorancho Jovanchev (North Macedonia), Miodrag Gavrilović (Serbia), Andriy Gerus (Ukraine), Victoria Gryb (Ukraine), Inna Sovsun (Ukraine)

European Parliament: Morten Petersen, Jerzy Buzek

Energy Community Secretariat: Artur Lorkowski, Barbora Poyner

Parliamentary Secretariats: Xhilda Pinci, Nenad Pandurevic, Armend Ademaj, Tijana Knezevic, Dragan Pulevski, Aleksandra Balac