

# EU-27 WATCH



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# EU-27 Watch

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## On the project

Due to the new treaty provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the economic crises the enlarged EU of 27 member states is on the search for a new modus operandi while also continuing membership talks with candidate countries. The EU-27 Watch project is mapping out discourses on these and more issues in European policies all over Europe. Research institutes from all 27 member states and the four candidate countries give overviews on the discourses in their respective countries.

The reports focus on a **reporting period from December 2009 until May 2010**. This survey was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire that has been elaborated in March and April 2010. Most of the 31 reports were delivered in May 2010. This issue and all previous issues are available on the EU-27 Watch website: [www.EU-27Watch.org](http://www.EU-27Watch.org).

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**Austria****Climate and energy policy – Copenhagen and beyond**

Hakan Akbulut\*

Even before the conference in Copenhagen ended, NGOs such as GLOBAL 2000 warned that the negotiations might collapse, in part due to Austrian intransigence related to the accounting of forest emissions.<sup>1</sup> When the conference indeed ended without producing any tangible results, the very same organisation stated that the declaration by the leaders was not worth the paper it was written upon.<sup>2</sup> The representative of the Climate Alliance Austria referred to the minimal compromise reached as a “climate catastrophe”.<sup>3</sup> He added that the only positive aspect to be mentioned was the commitment to provide 30 billion US-Dollars to developing countries in the period 2010-2012 and 100 billion US-Dollars a year by 2020 to cover mitigation and adaptation costs. Austrian Environment Minister Berlakovich openly acknowledged the failure of the conference. “Today is a black day for climate protection. What remains is only an invitation to continue”, Berlakovich held.<sup>4</sup> Later on, Chancellor Faymann blamed the organisers, saying that a conference bringing together 190 heads of government to achieve a compromise within three days should have been better prepared.<sup>5</sup> The Greens also stated that the conference in Copenhagen did not produce any results and criticised both the government and the EU.<sup>6</sup> Johanna Ruzicka, writing for the daily Der Standard, even argued that the minimal outcome of Copenhagen had led to an “international paralysis on the issue of climate protection and to a perplexity as to how to solve the problem of global warming.”<sup>7</sup> The Austrian Federal Economic Chamber also described the results of the conference as disappointing.<sup>8</sup> The EU strategy of trying to inspire other countries to commit themselves to emission reductions by adopting binding reduction goals prior to the conference had been flawed and had failed, the representative of the Chamber argued.

Overall, the EU unilaterally committing itself to more ambitious environmental goals, especially to greater levels of emission reduction, is opposed by the business circles. Before the conference in Copenhagen had started, the Federal Economic Chamber had demanded that all industrialised and threshold countries should adopt “reasonable” goals with regard to emission reduction.<sup>9</sup> The Chamber openly opposed the EU unilaterally raising the reduction goal to 30 percent during the conference unless other countries agreed to do so as well. It was argued that enterprises would otherwise flee the EU due to higher “CO<sub>2</sub> costs”. The President of the Chamber, Christoph Leitl, added that unilateral commitments would not be helpful anyway, as the EU was responsible only for 13 percent of emissions worldwide.<sup>10</sup> Leitl also pointed out that Austria had been overambitious in Kyoto and thus committed itself to goals it could not realise in the end. Thus, the country was now paying about 1 billion Euros in penalties, as had been anticipated and warned against by the Chamber. The Federation of Austrian Industries (IV) is reportedly not in favour of more demanding emission regulations either.<sup>11</sup> As for the government, while the Environment Minister Berlakovich called, according to a report by the daily Der Standard, for a concrete, clear-cut EU position in order to be able to put pressure on countries such as the US, China, or Brazil,<sup>12</sup> neither the Ministry of the Environment, nor the Ministry of the Economy supported the idea put forward by the EU Commissioner Connie Hedegaard to raise emission reduction goals to 30 percent.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, for the Greens or NGOs such as Global 2000, the reduction goals of the EU are not ambitious enough. Both demand that the EU should commit itself to reducing emissions by 40 percent.<sup>14</sup>

As for the various positions on financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries, the Greens and Global 2000 are apparently strongly in favour of financial contributions by the industrialised world. The Greens demand that the industrial countries, as the main polluters, should provide the developing countries 110 billion Euros a year by 2020, while the latter should have reduced their emissions by 15-30 percent by that time. Global 2000, using the term “climate justice” and citing a study by the Stockholm Environment Institute, holds that the “EU’s fair share of finances for the developing world amounts to 150 billion to 450 billion Euros per year by 2020.”<sup>15</sup> The decision by the EU to provide 7.2 billion Euros in immediate aid to developing countries for mitigation and adaptation efforts was also welcomed by the Member of the European Parliament Karin Kadenbach from the Social Democratic Party of Austria.<sup>16</sup> However, she added that more money was required and that the European Parliament had asked the heads of state and government to provide at least 30 billion Euros in aid to the developing countries until 2020. The Social Democratic Party’s support for

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the amount offered was also confirmed by the Party's speaker for Development Cooperation, Petra Bayr.<sup>17</sup>

As for the question as to whether the UNFCCC is the best framework to reach a global agreement on climate protection, no relevant debate could be identified for the reporting period.

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<sup>1</sup> Global 2000: Eine Woche Klimakonferenz – GLOBAL 2000 zieht erste Bilanz: Verhandlung stocken, Österreich bremst!, 11 December 2009, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091211\\_OTS0269/eine-woche-klimakonferenz-global-2000-zieht-erste-bilanz-verhandlung-stocken-oesterreich-bremst](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091211_OTS0269/eine-woche-klimakonferenz-global-2000-zieht-erste-bilanz-verhandlung-stocken-oesterreich-bremst) (last access: 17 May 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Global 2000: GLOBAL 2000 zu Kopenhagen: Verhandlungsdesaster statt notwendiger Klimaschutz!, 19 December 2009, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091219\\_OTS0032/global-2000-zu-kopenhagen-verhandlungsdesaster-statt-notwendiger-klimaschutz](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091219_OTS0032/global-2000-zu-kopenhagen-verhandlungsdesaster-statt-notwendiger-klimaschutz) (last access: 25 May 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Klimabündnis Österreich: Klimabündnis: Kopenhagen ist gescheitert, 19 December 2010, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091219\\_OTS0031/klimabuendnis-kopenhagen-ist-gescheitert](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091219_OTS0031/klimabuendnis-kopenhagen-ist-gescheitert) (last access: 22 May 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Lebensministerium: Kopenhagen: Geteilte Reaktionen auf Minimalkonsens bei Klimagipfel. Berlakovich kritisiert das Fehlen konkreter Zielvorgaben, 28 December 2009, available at: <http://www.lebensministerium.at/article/articleview/80470/1/26609/> (last access: 22 May 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Bundeskanzleramt Österreich: Bundeskanzler Faymann: Finanzmarktkontrolle, Bankenabgabe und Klimaschutz sind außenpolitische Schwerpunkte, 6 April 2010, available at: [http://www.austria.gv.at/site/cob\\_39134/6597/default.aspx](http://www.austria.gv.at/site/cob_39134/6597/default.aspx) (last access: 25 May 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Die Grünen: Kogler zu Klimagipfel Kopenhagen brachte Null-Ergebnis – Konferenz gescheitert, 19 December 2009, available at: <http://www.gruene.at/umwelt/artikel/lesen/53582/> (last access: 10 May 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Johanna Ruzicka: Klimaschutz in der Sackgasse, Der Standard, 13 January 2010.

<sup>8</sup> WKO: WKÖ-Schwarzer: Zweiteilung der Welt in Sachen CO<sub>2</sub>-Restriktionen muss überwunden werden, 20 December 2009, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091220\\_OTS0008/wkoe-schwarzer-zweiteilung-der-welt-in-sachen-co2-restriktionen-muss-ueberwunden-werden](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091220_OTS0008/wkoe-schwarzer-zweiteilung-der-welt-in-sachen-co2-restriktionen-muss-ueberwunden-werden) (last access: 5 May 2010).

<sup>9</sup> WKO: EU-Panorama, 27 November 2009, available at: [http://portal.wko.at/wk/dok\\_detail\\_file.wk?AngID=1&DocID=1207531&ConID=433687&StID=520663&titel=EU-Panorama.vom.27..November.2009](http://portal.wko.at/wk/dok_detail_file.wk?AngID=1&DocID=1207531&ConID=433687&StID=520663&titel=EU-Panorama.vom.27..November.2009) (last access: 4 May 2010).

<sup>10</sup> WKO: Leitl zu Klimaschutzgipfel: Europa muss alle großen CO<sub>2</sub>-Emittenten mit gleichwertigen Verpflichtungen ins Boot bekommen, 11 December 2009, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091211\\_OTS0186/leitl-zu-klimaschutzgipfel-europa-muss-alle-grossen-co2-emittenten-mit-gleichwertigen-verpflichtungen-ins-boot-bekommen](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091211_OTS0186/leitl-zu-klimaschutzgipfel-europa-muss-alle-grossen-co2-emittenten-mit-gleichwertigen-verpflichtungen-ins-boot-bekommen) (last access: 4 May 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Der Standard, 26 May 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Lebensministerium: Berlakovich: Schritt für Schritt hin zu einem neuen Klimaschutzabkommen, 9 April 2010, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20100409\\_OTS0023/berlakovich-schritt-fuer-schritt-hin-zu-einem-neuen-klimaschutzabkommen](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20100409_OTS0023/berlakovich-schritt-fuer-schritt-hin-zu-einem-neuen-klimaschutzabkommen) (last access: 5 May 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Note that Hedegaard has already revised her position. Cf. Der Standard, 26 May 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Die Grünen: Klimakonferenz Kopenhagen, available at: [http://www.gruene.at/umwelt/klimakonferenz\\_kopenhagen/](http://www.gruene.at/umwelt/klimakonferenz_kopenhagen/) (last access: 16 May 2010); Global 2000: Die 40 Prozent-Studie, 26 January 2010, available at: <http://www.global2000.at/site/de/wissen/klima/40prozentstudie/article-40prozent.htm> (last access: 22 May 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Global 2000: 40% by 2020, 2009, p. 3, available at: [http://www.global2000.at/module/media/data/global2000.at\\_de/content/klima/Question\\_and\\_Answers.pdf\\_me/Question\\_and\\_Answers.pdf](http://www.global2000.at/module/media/data/global2000.at_de/content/klima/Question_and_Answers.pdf_me/Question_and_Answers.pdf) (last access: 22 May 2010).

<sup>16</sup> SPÖ: Kadenbach: Einigung zu Soforthilfe für Entwicklungsländer zaghafter Schritt in richtige Richtung, 11 December 2009, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091211\\_OTS0283/kadenbach-einigung-zu-soforthilfe-fuer-entwicklungslaender-zaghafter-schritt-in-richtige-richtung](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091211_OTS0283/kadenbach-einigung-zu-soforthilfe-fuer-entwicklungslaender-zaghafter-schritt-in-richtige-richtung) (last access: 20 May 2010).

<sup>17</sup> SPÖ: Bayr zu EU-Soforthilfe: Erfreuliches Angebot der EU an Entwicklungsländer, 11 December 2009, available at: [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS\\_20091211\\_OTS0217/bayr-zu-eu-soforthilfe-erfreuliches-angebot-der-eu-an-entwicklungslaender](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20091211_OTS0217/bayr-zu-eu-soforthilfe-erfreuliches-angebot-der-eu-an-entwicklungslaender) (last access: 20 May 2010).

## Questionnaire for EU-27 Watch, No. 9

Reporting period December 2009 until May 2010 – Deadline for country reports 21 May

**All questions refer to the position/assessment of your country's government, opposition, political parties, civil society organisations, pressure groups, press/media, and public opinion. Please name sources wherever possible!**

### 1. Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty

On the 1 December 2009 the EU-reform ended with the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. However, the new treaty provisions still have to be implemented. Some procedures and conditions have to be determined. In other cases, procedures, power relations, and decision-making mechanisms will change due to the new provisions.

- How is the work of the new President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, assessed in your country? Which changes to the role of the rotating council presidency are expected?
- How is the work of the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, assessed in your country? Please take into particular consideration both her role within the European Commission and her relationship to the Council of the European Union.
- On 25 March 2010 a "Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service" was presented. How is this concept perceived in your country? Which alternatives are discussed?
- On 31 March 2010 the European Commission presented a proposal defining the rules and procedures for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). What are the expectations for the ECI in your country? What are the various positions concerning the rules and procedures?

### 2. Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Commission has given its opinion on Iceland's application for EU-membership and a decision from the Council is expected before the end of June. Croatia seems to have settled its border dispute with Slovenia. Against this background:

- Which countries does your country expect to become members of the European Union in the next enlargement round? What are the opinions in your country on the membership of these countries?
- How are the membership perspectives of those countries discussed, which are not expected to become a member in the next enlargement round?

The Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean were the last major projects dealing with the European neighbourhood:

- How are these projects assessed in your country?

### 3. European economic policy and the financial and economic crisis

The European Council agreed on 25/26 March on the key elements of the Europe 2020 strategy, the successor of the Lisbon strategy. While not being on the formal agenda the economic and financial situation in Greece was discussed. The European Council agreed on a finance package combining bilateral loans from the eurozone and financing through the International Monetary Fund.

- How is the finance package for Greece assessed in your country? Are there any opinions on the process, how the agreement on the package was reached?
- Which lessons should be drawn from the Greek case for a reform of the Stability and Growth Pact?
- How is the idea of "a strong coordination of economic policies in Europe" perceived in your country? What concepts of an European economic governance are discussed in your country and which role do they assign to the Euro group?
- How is the Europe 2020 strategy discussed in your country? What are the priorities for the Europe 2020 strategy from your country's perspective?

### 4. Climate and energy policy

The climate conference in Copenhagen took note of the Copenhagen Accord but did not reach a binding agreement. The next conference of the parties (COP 16 & CMP 6) will take place at the end of November 2010.

- How is the Copenhagen conference assessed in your country? Please take into consideration the negotiation strategy of European Union and the results of the conference.
- Does the European Union need to change its own energy and climate policy in order to give a new impulse to the international negotiations?
- Is a global agreement within the UNFCCC the best strategy to fight climate change? If not, which alternative strategy should the European Union follow?
- What is your country's position on financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries?

### 5. Current issues and discourses in your country

Which other topics and discourses are highly salient in your country but not covered by this questionnaire?