

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.

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Croatia**Limited attention by politicians, strong positions of NGOs****Ana-Maria Boromisa***

Before the Copenhagen conference, the government, civil society organisations and the media expected that it would be possible to make a binding agreement.¹ Luka Bebić, the speaker of the Croatian parliament, expressed expectations that long-term obligations for emission reductions for the period 2020 with a view to 2050 would be finalised at the Copenhagen conference, as well as the implementation and financing of rules.² The media announced the conference as challenging, and expectations were rather large.³

The presidential campaign in Croatia took place during the Copenhagen conference; however, climate issues and energy policy were not debated much. Most of the candidates barely (or not at all) mentioned climate change in their programmes,⁴ or were unaware of the issues debated in Copenhagen.⁵ Ivo Josipović is one of the rare candidates who did talk about climate change in his campaign and stressed that he sees a stronger role for civil organisations and associations on advocating these issues.⁶

The government's position is rather ambiguous: The formal negotiating position (and national pledge) is a 5 percent temporary reduction target for 2013-2020. It derives from the EU's negotiating strategy, but it is officially stated that following accession to the EU, Croatia will replace its individual interim target and share the EU commitment for 2020. Croatia also supports the European Union's position regarding organisation and method of work in 2010 in order to facilitate negotiations among parties.

The NGOs, on the other hand, requested that Croatia accept a 25 percent reduction target⁷ and evaluated the results of the Copenhagen conference as a failure. This was also the prevailing conclusion of the media reports on the Copenhagen Accord.⁸

Europe will certainly not solve the climate problem on its own, but it can help to deliver abatement technologies and to prove that fighting climate change can be reconciled with economic growth – provided a long-term framework is established that is in line with other goals such as security of supply and affordable energy. This was concluded at the 18th Forum of the Croatian Energy Society.⁹ The Forum was focused on analysis and views on energy sector development. The views expressed there had significant impact on policy makers and politicians: in his speech at the Ukrainian National University of Natural and Ecological Sciences,¹⁰ Luka Bebić, speaker of the Croatian parliament, was evidently inspired by the conference conclusions. It is considered that the European energy sector can deliver valuable input to the discussion about the coming climate goals and how to achieve them by addressing the importance of new climate-friendly technologies. The climate change goals should be reflected in investment decisions.¹¹

The Copenhagen conference revealed the weaknesses of the UN system. As the negotiations in Copenhagen showed, major progress was achieved outside the UN process. In this context, the media reported that the UN had lost its influence in the field of climate change and opened discussions on examining alternative forums, such as the G20.¹²

Possibilities of reaching an efficient way to combat climate change was the key topic of the roundtable "What after Copenhagen?" organised by Vecernji list. It revealed a wide spectrum of ideas, ranging from the need for a global centralised governing structure and strengthening of global market rules for the energy sector through the World Trade Organization (WTO), to national or regional solutions, including a serious turn to renewable energy sources. It was concluded that the best option consists of combining local measures with a global agreement.¹³

Croatia's official positions lack a long-term strategic view on the issue and they mainly comply with the EU requirements based on the principle of conditionality.¹⁴ In its submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Croatia stated that upon its accession to the European Union, its target shall be replaced by an arrangement in line with and part of the European Union mitigation effort.¹⁵ The economic costs of achieving a 30 percent cut in emissions by 2020

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(equivalent to 16.9 million tons of CO₂ in 2020) from the baseline of 36 million tons per year are estimated to be 115-536 million Euros (e.g., 0.31-1.43 percent of Gross Domestic Product).¹⁶ The estimate shows that major reductions are possible with relatively moderate economic costs. However, political, institutional, technical and other considerations have to be resolved to reach these reduction levels. Croatia's official target, 33.2 million tons, indicates the difficulties in investing in domestic measures. Thus, it is not likely that Croatia would provide relevant input to financing mitigation and adaptation.

¹ E.g. Ivan Gregov (journalist): Two weeks that can change a world, Zamirzine weekly, 3 December 2009.

² L. Bebić: Speech, Ukrainian National University of Natural and Ecological sciences, 30 November 2009, available at: <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?art=31415> (last access: 17 May 2010).

³ E.g., Banka magazine, Večernji list, 7 December 2009, available at: <http://www.bankamagazine.hr/default.aspx?TabId=104&View=Details&ItemID=5599> (last access: 17 May 2010).

⁴ E.g., presidential programmes of the candidates of the major political parties, such as HDZ (of Andrija Hebrang, candidate of the HDZ), available at: <http://andrijahebrang.info/default.aspx?id=12> (last access: 17 May 2010), even the programme of Vesna Pusić, HNS, has not mentioned climate change.

⁵ E.g. Milan Bandić, who got into the second round of elections, RTL, Presidential Forum, Debate, 19 December 2009.

⁶ Jospiović, interview with civil society organisations, cited according to Omer Rak: Dossier. I like green, 19 December 2009, available at: <http://www.boell.hr/web/index-263.html> (last access: 17 May 2010).

⁷ Green Action, available at: www.zelena-akcija.hr/ (last access: 17 May 2010).

⁸ E.g., Deutsche Welle: There is a will, but no results, 18 December 2009, available at: <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5035356,00.html> (last access: 17 May 2010).

⁹ HED: Zagreb, 2009, available at: http://www.hed.hr/pdf/18_HED_%20Zbornik%20sazetak.pdf (last access: 17 May 2010).

¹⁰ Luka Bebić: Speech, Ukrainian National University of Natural and Ecological sciences, 30 November 2009, available at: <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?art=31415> (last access: 17 May 2010).

¹¹ Stefan Urlich: World Energy Council, at 18 Forum: Energy Day in Croatia, Zagreb, December 2009.

¹² HINA, Croatian News Agency, 20 December 2009.

¹³ Roundtable "What after Copenhagen", organised by Večernji list, Zagreb, 23 April 2010.

¹⁴ V. Horvat, at conference "What Climate has to do with it", Zagreb, 22 April 2010.

¹⁵ Ministry for environmental protection: physical planning and construction, press release, 10 December 2009, quoted according to Alert, independent environmental magazine, available at:

http://www.alertonline.org/magazine/full.php?subaction=showfull&id=1260648323&archive=&start_from=&ucat=2& (last access: 17 May 2010); Croatia's quantified target submitted to the UNFCCC, available at:

http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/application/pdf/croatiaacphaccord_app1.pdf (last access: 17 May 2010).

¹⁶ Seth Landau: Climate for Change, 2008, p. 199.

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?