

Reforming the EU: What Role for Climate and Energy Policies in a Reformed EU?

Workshop, 18th April 2018
Sofia, Bulgaria

Summary

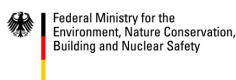
About 50 participants attended this high-level event (participant list and programme attached). Participants came from government, Parliament, EU institutions, several European embassies, civil society, and business. Bulgaria's deputy ministers of environment and energy spoke at the meeting.

The Bulgarian presidency has negotiated and partly closed a number of dossiers relevant for climate and energy policies but the link between these policies and EU reform has not been strong. Climate and energy policies largely continued its (routine) debate – regardless of the on-going debate on reforming the EU. The workshop was a welcomed opportunity to begin a more detailed discussion on the interlinkages between EU reform and climate and energy policies. To allow for a significant Bulgarian contribution in this context, this debate has to be enhanced in the coming months. It was agreed that the EU must play a strong role in energy and climate policies. The EU should preserve its climate leadership. Both policies are prime examples of policies that require joint and coordinated action but Bulgaria has not always shaped the debate at EU level.

In more detail:

- It was largely agreed that the energy transition is a great **economic opportunity** for investment and innovation but the EU is losing out in this race. Electrification of transport in Bulgaria very slow with only a very few cars sold last year.
- It was largely agreed that the EU should help to reduce and avoid **double standards** in the EU. Double standards in all policy fields – not only in climate and energy policies – are of great political importance in Bulgaria – as part of the debate on EU solidarity and convergence.
- It was said that EU reform must support **financing the energy transition**.
- Participants agreed that **energy is not a national issues** but an issue that requires close cooperation between Member States in a more integrated energy market. It was agreed that new interconnectors and better regional balancing are needed. Participants discussed statistical transfers under the renewable energy directive.
- In broad terms, the discussion touched on **energy poverty**. It was said the EU still lacks a clear definition and strategy.
- It was discussed to what extent there is an **East-West divide** in the EU or whether this is only a theoretical concept that does not reflect a more complex reality. It was agreed that the East-

Supported by:



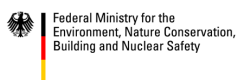
based on a decision of the German Bundestag



West framing does not support policy-making and should give way to thinking about coalition opportunities across the EU.

- It was agreed that **air pollution** – a very pressing issue in Bulgaria that features high on the national agenda – should be closely linked to climate action and public interest.
- It was said that the **EU 2050 climate and energy strategy** must be more than a simple up-date of the 2011 roadmap. It needs to take account of the Paris Agreement and its obligations.

Supported by:



based on a decision of the German Bundestag



European
Climate Initiative
EUKI