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Assessment of climate change policies in the context of the European Semester

Country Report: Cyprus



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The report provides an overview of current emission trends and progress towards targets as well as policy developments that took place over the period from February 2013 to November 2013.

Please feel free to provide any comments or suggestions to the authors through the contacts listed above.

Short summary

Background: Cyprus, as an island country, is impacted by higher costs for and emissions from energy due to the fact that it imports oil for electricity generation. This has led to an emphasis on developing domestic sources, most prominently through offshore natural gas exploration, and the establishment of interconnections with other energy grids, notably the EuroAsia Interconnector, which is planned to link Cyprus with both Greece and Israel. Additionally, Cyprus has implemented a number of modest measures to encourage energy efficiency improvements.

Non-ETS emission reduction target: The Cypriot 2020 target is -5% (compared to 2005), and emissions were reduced already by 21% between 2005 and 2011. According to the latest national projections submitted to the Commission and based on existing measures, non-ETS emissions are projected to decrease by 49% (compared to 2005) by 2020, overachieving the target by the significant margin of 44 percentage points – the largest projected overachievement in the EU at present.

Key indicators 2011:

GHG emissions	CY	EU
ESD EU 2020 GHG target (comp. 2005)	-5%	
ESD GHG emissions in 2011 (comp.2005)	-21%	-9%
Total GHG emissions 2012 (comp.2005)	-8%	-12%
GHG emissions/capita (tCO ₂ eq)	10.9	9.0

→ **21% higher** per capita emissions than EU average

GHG emissions per sector	CY	EU
Energy/power industry sector	41%	33%
Transport	25%	20%
Industry (incl. industrial processes)	13%	20%
Agriculture (incl. forestry & fishery)	9%	12%
Residential & Commercial	6%	12%
Waste & others	6%	3%

→ **Energy/power industry** sector followed by Transport

Energy	CY	EU
EU 2020 RES target	+13%	
Primary energy consumption/capita (toe)	3.2	3.4
Energy intensity (kgoe/1000 €)	174	144
Energy to trade balance (% of GDP)	-7.5%	-3.2%

→ **6% lower** per capita consumption, around **20% higher** energy intensity, contribution of energy to trade balance **more than double** EU average.

Taxes	CY	EU
Share of environmental taxes (% of GDP)	2.9%	2.4%
Implicit tax rate on energy (€/toe)	142	184

→ **Slightly higher** share of environmental taxes and **23% lower** implicit tax rate on energy than EU average

Key policy developments in 2013: In 2013, a total of €25 million was earmarked for renewable energy and energy efficiency support schemes across all sectors. It was expected that this would support the installation of 6 MW of solar PV. Additionally, a new net metering scheme was expected to support nearly 20 MW of new PV capacity. 2013 also brought the finalisation of an agreement between Cyprus, Greece, and Israel to connect their electricity grids via underwater cables by 2017. New biofuels blending quotas in the transport sector are expected to decrease emissions from vehicle fuel by 6% by 2020. New plans were also drawn up for encouraging greater use of public transportation and for reducing landfill waste through recycling and composting schemes.

Key challenges: Renewable electricity reached only a share of 3.4% of total consumption in 2011 compared to the target of a 13% share by 2020. While new programs have been initiated since that time, the Cypriot government has already discussed the potential of requiring a “statistical transfer” of renewable energy generation from other Member States in order to fulfil their national target. Continued and increased support for the expansion of renewable energies generating capacity should be a priority in order to achieve Cyprus’s targets in this area and also to support their overarching objective of becoming more energy independent.

Additionally, the transport sector is in particular need of attention. Lacking any currently operating railways, transportation within Cyprus is almost exclusively done via automobile. However, the Cypriot vehicle fleet is one of the least efficient in the EU (5th highest in the EU) with average emissions of 144.5 gCO₂/km. Cyprus has enacted a bonus/malus calculation as part of its registration tax. The tax benefits are given to any car that emits less than 150 gCO₂/km, i.e. there is no incentive provided for consumers to purchase a car that is more efficient than the current average. Furthermore, taxes on petrol are among the lowest in the EU.

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I Background on climate and energy policies

In 2013, Cyprus' climate and energy policy was focussed on the future exploitation of natural gas and the balance of power in a very politically fragile region. In September 2013, the drilling commenced for an "Appraisal Well" at Block 12. This new gas project has crucial political implications, as the exploitation of natural gas in the area constitutes the greatest priority for Cyprus's energy policy agenda, which risks undermining other issues and priorities within the climate agenda.

However, the introduction of new renewable energy and energy efficiency support schemes signals Cyprus's determination to try to cope simultaneously with other challenges, such as the consequences of climate change in the region. Primarily with the introduction of three new net metering schemes in July 2013, the Cypriot government has shown great willingness to promote the use of renewable energy alongside the exploitation of domestic hydrocarbon resources.

Cyprus is already being affected by the impacts of climate change. The annual mean temperature during the period 1980-2010 was 18.6°C, 1.4°C higher than that of the period 1960-1990 (17.2°C) and in 2010 it reached 20.6°C. Impacts on precipitation levels have also been observed, with an 8% reduction in mean annual rainfall in the period 1990-2010 as compared to 1960-1990 (Ελεγκτική Υπηρεσία της Δημοκρατίας 2012). Climate adaptation efforts include a publication from the Auditing Agency of Cyprus in 2012 on climate adaptation and the CYPADAPT LIFE+ Programme. The goal of that Programme is the development of a climate adaptation strategy and it is being coordinated by the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) ⁽¹⁾. With respect to mitigation, a draft Law on Climate Change was open for public consultation in 2011, but no further information on its status is available (Υπουργείο Γεωργίας, Φυσικών Πόρων και Περιβάλλοντος, 2011).

2 GHG projections

Background information:

In 2011, Cyprus emitted 9.2 Mt CO₂e (UNFCCC inventory 2011), 50% more than in 1990. More than 40% of total emissions stem from energy supply. Emissions from that sector more than doubled between 1990 and 2010. Emissions from transport, which currently account for around 25% of total emissions, grew by more than 90% during that period. Emissions from agriculture, industrial processes and emissions from energy use remained stable. However, from 2009 to 2012 Cyprus reduced its emissions in all sectors besides agriculture (EEA 2013c).

Progress on GHG targets

There are two sets of targets to evaluate: 1) the Kyoto Protocol targets for the period 2008-12 (which has just ended) and 2) the 2020 targets for emissions not covered by the EU ETS.

¹ CYPADAPT ends on March 2014. For more information: <http://uest.ntua.gr/cypadapt/>

Cyprus has no target under the Kyoto Protocol for the period 2008-12. An evaluation of the latest complete set of greenhouse gas data (for the year 2011; there is only preliminary data for 2012) shows that Cyprus's emissions have increased by 50% since 1990 (UNFCCC inventory 2011).

By 2020, Cyprus needs to decrease its emissions not covered by the EU ETS by 5% compared to 2005 according to the Effort Sharing Decision (ESD) ⁽²⁾. The latest data for 2012 suggests that Cyprus is on track to meet the Annual Emissions Allocation ⁽³⁾ for the year 2013. By 2020, national projections (EEA 2013b) show that the country will overachieve its 2020 target by much as 44 percentage points with existing measures (see Table 1), which is the highest value among MS.

Table 1: GHG emission developments, ESD-targets and projections (in Mt CO₂eq)

	1990	2005	2010	2011	2012*	ESD target**		2020 Projections***	
						2013	2020	WEM	WAM
Total	6.1	9.3	9.4	9.2	8.5				
Non-ETS (% from 2005)		5.8	4.4	4.6	4.2	5.6	5.5	3	2
				-21%	-28%	-4%	-5%	-49%	-70%
Energy supply (% share of total)	1.8 29%	3.5 37%	3.9 41%	3.7 41%					
Energy use (w/o transport) (% share of total)	1.3 21%	1.5 16%	1.2 13%	1.1 13%					
Transport (% share of total)	1.2 19%	2.0 22%	2.3 24%	2.2 25%					
Industrial processes (% share of total)	0.7 12%	0.9 10%	0.6 7%	0.7 8%					
Agriculture (% share of total)	0.7 11%	0.7 8%	0.7 8%	0.7 8%					

Source: UNFCCC inventories; EEA (2013b); Calculations provided by the EEA and own calculations.

* proxies for 2012 emissions summarised by EEA (2013b)

** The ESD target for 2013 and for 2020 refer to different scopes of the ETS: the 2013 target is compared with 2012 data and is therefore consistent with the scope of the ETS from 2008-2012; the 2020 target is compared to 2020 projections and is therefore consistent with the adjusted scope of the ETS from 2013-2020. 2005 non-ETS emissions for the scope of the ETS from 2013-2020 amounted to 6Mt CO₂eq.

***Projections with existing measures (WEM) or with additional measures (WAM).

Legend for colour coding: green = target is being (over)achieved; orange = not on track to meet the target

Total greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and shares of GHG do not include emissions and removals from LULUCF (carbon sinks) and emissions from international aviation and international maritime transport.

² Decision No 406/2009/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the effort of Member States to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to meet the Community's greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments up to 2020.

³ Commission decision of 26 March 2013 on determining Member States' annual emission allocations for the period from 2013 to 2020 pursuant to Decision No 406/2009/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council. Online available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:090:0106:0110:EN:PDF>

National projections of GHG emissions up to 2020 need to be prepared by the Member States in accordance with the EU Monitoring Mechanism ⁽⁴⁾ every two years, and the latest submission was due in 2013. The projections need to be prepared reflecting a scenario that estimates total GHG emissions reductions in line with policies and measures that have already been implemented (with existing measures, WEM), and an additional scenario that reflects developments with measures and policies that are in the planning phase (with additional measures, WAM) may also be submitted.

In the following two tables, these measures have been summarised with a focus on national measures and those EU instruments expected to reduce emissions the most. Please note that the table includes also measures that address GHG emissions covered under the ETS such as measures reducing emissions from electricity generation (e.g. feed-in tariffs). An update on the status of the policies and measures is included in order to assess the validity of the scenarios.

Table 2: Existing and additional measures as stated in the 2013 GHG projections

Existing Measures (only important national measures)		Status of policy in November 2013
Energy	Promotion and encouragement of the use of renewable energy sources in electricity production	An amendment to Law No. 33(I) on the Promotion and Encouragement of the Use of RES and Energy Efficiency was open for public consultation until September 2012 and Law No. 122(I) 2013 on the Promotion and Encouragement of the Use of RES entered into force in September 2013 (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία 2013b).
	Use of renewable energy sources in electricity production	Support scheme for the promotion of RES and energy conservation 2013: The scheme supports measures, such as PV, small wind, small hydro, and biomass, by financing a percentage of the investment. The exact ratio depends on the kind of legal person applying and if the legal person is eligible for a special subsidy (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d).
	Use of renewable energy sources in heating and cooling	Support scheme for the promotion of RES and energy conservation 2013: The scheme supports measures, such as solar-thermal collectors or heat pumps, by financing a percentage of the investment. The exact ratio depends on the kind of legal person and the legal person's eligibility for a special subsidy (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d).
	Use of renewable energy sources in transport	Support scheme for the promotion of RES and energy conservation 2013: The scheme supports the production of biofuels for transport (max. amount of subsidy €200,000) (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013b).

⁴ Decision No 280/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 concerning a mechanism for monitoring Community greenhouse gas emissions and for implementing the Kyoto Protocol.

Energy Efficiency	Savings from energy efficiency in residential buildings	Support scheme for the promotion of RES and energy conservation 2013: The scheme supports measures, such as thermal insulation on roofs (max. amount of subsidy €1,800) and thermal insulation for the entire building (max. amount of subsidy €2,500) (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013a). In addition, the Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings (2010/31/EC) was transposed through the amendment of Law No. 142 (I) 2006 (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία 2012a).
	Savings from energy efficiency in the tertiary sector	Support scheme for the promotion of RES and energy conservation 2013: The scheme supports measures related to the purchase, installation and replacement of energy efficient equipment, such as energy management information systems, energy recovery systems and systems for reactive power (max. amount of subsidy €50,000) (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013b). In addition, the Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings (2010/31/EC) has been transposed with the Amendment of Law No. 142 (I) 2006 (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία 2012a).
Transport	Promotion of vehicle replacement	The fifth vehicle replacement promotion scheme since 2008 was prepared in September by the Ministry of Transport, but the Ministry of Finance did not consent to its implementation (ΣΕΜΟ, 2012).
	Promotion of public transport	In 2010, an integrated mobility master plan for Nicosia was developed and a Public Transport Programme was announced. Currently, there is a discussion on the construction of a tram line in Nicosia. A feasibility study is expected to cost approximately €300,000 and its assignment was signed in December 2013. The infrastructure construction will be co-financed by EU Structural Funds (Γραφείο Τύπου και Πληροφοριών, 2013).
Other non-ETS sectors	Methane recovery from existing and new waste management sites	Support scheme for electricity generation from wind energy, solar energy and biomass 2013 supports the production of biogas from landfills through a premium tariff (up to €0.0974/kWh) (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013d).

Source: Reporting of MS in accordance with Decision No 280/2004/EC about their GHG emission projections up to 2020, May 2013.

Almost all of the policies in the WEM scenario are implemented. Similar to the previous years of its implementation, the support scheme for RES heat and biofuels and Energy Conservation supports a wide spectrum of energy-related measures and constitutes the basic instrument for the realisation of the WEM scenario, and with it Cyprus is expected to achieve its reduction target. The WAM scenario lists the same measures as the WEM scenario but envisages a more ambitious implementation of the policies and measures addressing the transport sector. Under this more ambitious scenario, Cyprus is projected to almost halve its non-ETS emissions by 2020 compared to 1990 levels, and would thus significantly overachieve its 2020 target.

3 Evaluation of National Reform Programme 2013 (NRP)

In April of each year, Member States are required to prepare their National Reform Programmes (NRPs), which outline the country's progress regarding the targets of the EU 2020 Strategy. The NRPs describe the country's national targets under the Strategy and contain a description of how the country intends to meet these targets. For climate change and energy, three headline targets exist: 1) the reduction of GHG emissions, 2) the increase of renewable energy generation, and 3) an increase in energy efficiency.

The focus of the current NRP of Cyprus is on energy efficiency and renewable energy. Regarding energy efficiency, the NRP offers a detailed account on the hydrocarbon exploration, providing only scarce information on other energy efficiency measures. In relation to renewable energy, the NRP provides information on Cyprus' newly introduced net metering scheme.

In the following table, the main policies and measures, as outlined in the NRP of April 2013 ⁽⁵⁾, have been summarised, and their current statuses (implemented, amended, abolished, or expired) are given, with specific information on their latest developments.

Table 3: Main policies and measures as outlined in the NRP, April 2013

Hydrocarbon Exploration	
Status as stated in the NRP	Ongoing.
Status as per Nov 2013	For Block No. 12, drilling of the "Appraisal Well" commenced on 11 September 2013.
Description of policy or measure	Exploration of hydrocarbons constitutes one of the main priorities of Cyprus at the moment. The exploration and use of natural gas should make the energy system more efficient and less carbon intensive. At the moment, Cyprus' energy consumption relies almost fully on oil imports (European Commission 2013b).
Acceleration and immediate implementation of installation projects of photovoltaic parks	
Status as stated in the NRP	Under implementation.
Status as per Nov 2013	The companies that were successful in the tender of the Support Scheme for Electricity Generation from large PV installations in 2012 have received an extension in order to complete their projects (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013d). The Cyprus Regulatory Authority on Energy (CERA) has initiated an accelerated approval process for the successful bidders and all related authorities are expected to follow suit. It is expected that all related PV installations will be connected to the grid by summer 2014(PAEK, 2013b).
Description of policy or measure	In 2012, Cyprus introduced for the first time a tender for large PV systems (in total for a capacity of 50 MW).

⁵All NRPs are available http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

Net Metering	
Status as stated in the NRP	Under implementation.
Status as per Nov 2013	Applications to net metering schemes are open until the end of December 2013. The first round of applications for the subsidised purchase of a PV system ended in August 2013 and the second round of applications began in September 2013 and ended on 15 November 2013.
Description of policy or measure	Beginning in 2012, CERA (Cyprus Energy Regulatory Authority) discussed the prospects of introducing a net metering scheme. After the implementation of a pilot project, two specific net metering schemes were introduced: the first supports the purchase of a PV system of up to 3kW with €900/kWh); the second applies net metering to PV systems of up to 3kW that are connected to the grid. There is also a provision specifically for local administration buildings. Moreover, CERA has decided to apply a net metering scheme to self-producers for large scale PV systems, up to 500kW (PAEK, 2013).
Public Transport Enhancement Programme	
Status as stated in the NRP	Ongoing.
Status as per Nov 2013	No updates available regarding this measure.
Description of policy or measure	A Public Transport Enhancement Programme was introduced in 2007 with the aim to increase the use of public transport to 10% by 2020.

4 Policy development

This section covers significant developments made in key policy areas between February 2013 and November 2013. It does not attempt to describe every instrument in the given thematic areas.

Environmental Taxation

The share of environmental taxation in total tax revenues in Cyprus was 8.21% in 2011, well above the EU average. This is also the case if these revenues are compared with the country's GDP: they amount to 2.89%, which is the 6th highest value in the EU. Cyprus has no explicit carbon tax in place. Cyprus' implicit tax rate on energy was at €142 per tonne of oil equivalent (toe) in 2011. Although Cyprus's implicit tax rate is only moderate, the share of energy taxes in total tax revenues was above the EU average (Eurostat 2013a).

Energy Efficiency

The energy intensity of Cyprus's economy declined (-6%) from 2005 to 2011. However, the country's final energy consumption increased by 4% over the same time period. This is undoubtedly a result of increases in the transport sector. The developments between 2010 and 2011 were more positive: final energy consumption decreased to -1%. However, Cyprus's reduction rate is still slower than the EU average, was -4% for that period (Eurostat 2013a).

Most of the energy efficiency improvements have been achieved in the industrial sector, with industries under the Emissions Trading Scheme: the non-metallic mineral branch, with the cement industry as a frontrunner, improved its efficiency by 40% between 2000 and 2010. The situation has however deteriorated in the food industry. Progress in the household sector can be reported since 2007. This is mostly the result of policies implemented after Cyprus's accession to the EU in 2004. Further significant energy savings are expected in the coming years, due to stricter efficiency requirements (Odyssee 2012).

Cyprus promotes energy efficiency measures via support schemes for the utilisation of RES and energy conservation. The Special Fund for RES and Energy Efficiency, operating under the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, is the implementing authority with a budget of €25 million for the year 2013 (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία 2013a). The budget of the Special Fund is defined annually by law (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, 2013b). Support is differentiated based on the legal status of the applicant and the respective energy efficiency intervention. In 2013, three different support schemes were available under the Fund.

Under the first scheme, natural persons and public entities that do not exercise economic activity are eligible for subsidies when installing thermal insulation on buildings with a Building Permit by 21 December 2020. According to this support scheme, 30% of the total investment can be financed by the programme. However, the maximum amount of support per building is set at €1,800 (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013a).

The second scheme provides financial support for energy efficiency measures to private and public entities that are economically active (industry and tertiary sector). There is a *de minimis* subsidy amounting to 30% of the total investment (max. sum per application is €50,000). A regional subsidy can also be granted and amounts to 15%, 20%, or 30% of the total investment (max. sum per application is €50,000) (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013b).

A third scheme supports energy generation from wind, solar, and biomass (see below). The support schemes for energy efficiency are expected to cumulatively cause an annual emissions reduction of 850,000 tonnes CO_{2e} by 2020 (Republic of Cyprus, 2012).

It has been highlighted that energy efficiency policies in Cyprus are not very ambitious, but they are on the right track (Energy Efficiency Watch, 2013). In addition, some support measures could not be implemented due to a lack of funding and the annual support schemes clearly indicate a preference and priority to the development of RES (Energy Efficiency Watch, 2013). Consequently, households, services, and industry, which are the main beneficiaries of those support schemes, are mainly affected by that priority.

However, specifically for the building sector, Cyprus has transposed Directive 2010/31/EC into national law, through Law No. 210(I) 2012 (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία 2012a). Apart from that, the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MCIT) issued a report on "Provision of Consulting Services for the Definition of the Nearly Zero Energy Residential Buildings in Cyprus" in June 2012 (Υπουργείο Εμπορίου, Βιομηχανίας, και Τουρισμού, 2012). In that report, a definition of "Nearly Zero Energy Residential Buildings" (NZERB) is provided, as well as policy recommendations on how to implement their development. More specifically, the report proposes a three-stage action plan for the realization of NZERBs in Cyprus: by 2015 a voluntary phase will be

introduced, followed by a partial implementation of the action plan by 2018, and it concludes with its full implementation in 2020 (Υπουργείο Εμπορίου, Βιομηχανίας, και Τουρισμού, 2012). Finally, a more detailed technical description and calculation of the minimum standards of Directive 2010/31/EC were issued by the MCIT in April 2013 (MCIT, 2013).

Further actions and plans on the field on energy efficiency in the other sectors (e.g. industry, services, and agriculture) are not foreseen.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy use as a portion of final consumption has been increasing slowly but consistently in Cyprus. However, at 5.4% of total consumption in 2011, the country is quite far from reaching its target of 13% by 2020. The share of electricity generated from renewable sources in final electricity consumption is still negligible and increased from almost zero to 3.4% between 2005 and 2011 (Eurostat 2013b).

Cyprus' untapped potential for renewable energy generation is considerable, especially with respect to solar energy. According to the Cyprus Energy Agency, it is estimated that the deployment of RES in Cyprus could create up to 2,780 new jobs by 2020 (Ενεργειακό Γραφείο Κυπρίων Πολιτών 2011). Based on its National Renewable Energy Action Plan, Cyprus promotes the use of renewable energy sources through different support schemes, including feed-in tariffs for large scale RES installations, biomass utilization, and wind parks, and subsidies for the installation of RES. The support schemes are expected to cause a cumulative reduction of 800,000 tonnes CO₂e annually by 2020 through the promotion of renewable energy (Republic of Cyprus 2012).

Under the Special Fund for RES and Energy Conservation, two different support schemes are available. Financial support is provided for the installation of a number of specific RES to natural persons and public entities that do not exercise economic activity. Generally, the support scheme covers on average 55% of the total costs of installation for small wind power, PV systems, and biomass systems. More specifically for the support category "PV systems 3kW for domestic use," the selection of the successful applicants will be based on social and income criteria. The first round was completed in August 2013 and the second was opened in September 2013 and closed on 18 October 2013. During the first round, 887 applications were submitted and 1,113 more are expected to be approved in the second round, amounting to 6MW (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2013a).

The Support Scheme for legal persons and public entities that exercise economic activity provides two categories of support: a *de minimis* and a regional one. While the regional subsidy targets applicants from specific regions of the country, all other entities can profit from a *de minimis* subsidy. A number of specific RES technologies are supported, such as wind power, PV, biomass, small hydro, and geothermal. The amount of the *de minimis* subsidy varies between 15%, 25% or 35% of the total costs and depends on the size of the enterprise that submits for application (large, medium, small respectively). The amount of the regional subsidy is on average 35% of the total costs (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ, 2013b).

Apart from the subsidy scheme, fixed feed-in tariffs are provided through the Support Scheme for Electricity Generation from Wind Energy, Solar Energy, and Biomass (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ 2012c). PV installations between

20 kW and 150 kW receive a premium tariff of €13.8 ct/kWh; wind farms receive €0.145/kWh, and; biogas from landfills receive €0.0974/kWh ⁽⁶⁾ (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ, 2013d).

Additionally, the Cypriot Regulatory Authority on Energy (CERA) announced, on 4 July 2013, three supplementary schemes and introduced net metering as an RES support mechanism. Apart from 6MW of domestic PV that will be supported through the aforementioned support schemes, CERA accepts submissions under three categories: domestic PV systems (9MW), PV systems installed on local administration buildings (0.2MW), and autonomous PV systems in commercial or industrial units (10MW). Successful applicants will benefit from a net metering system that offsets electricity consumption expenses with the income from PV electricity production. Applications for the first two categories were accepted through 15 November 2013 (ΠΑΕΚ, 2013a).

Finally, after long discussions and under the threat of a fine by the European Commission, Directive 2009/28/EC (RES Directive) was transposed into national law through Law No.122(I) 2013 on the Promotion of Renewable Energy Sources (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, 2013b). The law adopts national RES targets for 2020 and foresees the issue of “statistical transfer between Member States”. In addition, Law No.122(I) includes provisions on the procedure for receiving installation and operating licenses for RES (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, 2013b). Nevertheless, in November 2013 the European Court of Justice has approved the Commission’s appeal against Cyprus for failing to transpose the RES Directive. In addition to conviction, the Commission has also recommended the imposition of a financial penalty (Cyprus Mail, 2013).

Energy Networks

Cyprus is a small isolated island with no energy grid interconnections to other countries. The politically fragile state of the region could perhaps have prevented any consideration of connecting the island to the EU or other countries. Nevertheless, the exploration of Cypriot natural gas deposits has led to new developments on the island. In this case, under the EurAsia Interconnector Project, one of the EU’s “Projects of Common Interest”, the electricity interconnection of the island with Greece and Israel is expected to be realized. The project consists of two phases: (1) interconnection of the Greek mainland grid with the island of Crete & interconnection of Israel and Cyprus, and (2) interconnection of Crete and Cyprus. It is estimated that the first phase of the project can be completed by the first trimester of 2017 (Energypress 2013).

Transport

Emissions from transport increased steadily between 1990 and 2011 and only showed a slight downward trend in 2011. During this time period, their proportion among Cyprus total emissions increased to 25%. This indicates that further efforts are needed to alter this trend (Table 1).

Average emissions for newly registered cars are very high in Cyprus with a level of 144.5 gCO₂/km. The level is the 5th highest in the EU and has decreased at a lower rate than EU average between 2005 and 2012 (Eurostat 2013a). Cyprus is levying a registration

⁶ Biogas also receives a bonus of €0.0171/kWh if certain technologies are employed.

tax and an ownership tax, which are both based on engine capacity. An additional CO₂-based bonus-malus system applies to the registration tax and vehicles that emit less than 150 gCO₂/km have been granted a tax reduction bonus of 15% on the ownership tax (ACEA 2012). No road use charge applies (CE Delft 2012).

While Cyprus levies a tax on petrol that is well below EU average, the diesel tax is among the highest in the EU, together with UK and Sweden (European Commission 2013a).

Through the Support scheme for the utilisation of RES and Energy Conservation 2013 for private and public entities that exercise economic activity, the production of biofuels for transport is supported with a *de minimis* subsidy (35% of the total budget, max. €200,000) or regional subsidy (5%, 25%, or 35% of the total budget, max. €200,000) (Επιτροπή Διαχείρισης Ειδικού Ταμείου ΑΠΕ και ΕΞΕ, 2013b).

Furthermore, on 10 September 2013 the Parliament of Cyprus adopted an amendment of Law 148(I) of 2003 on the standards of petroleum products and fuels, containing provisions on the definition of sustainability criteria for biofuels as well as their assessment. Additionally, the law foresees the establishment of a national system for monitoring the sustainability criteria. A mandatory quota of biofuel use in transport is also imposed on fuel suppliers so that a 6% reduction of GHG emissions in the fuel life-cycle in the transport sector can be achieved by 2020 (Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, 2013c).

One large obstacle to the development of biofuels in the country is that, as with other vehicle fuels, an excise duty is imposed on biofuels. The pilot programme “Tiganokinisi,” initiated in 2011, currently collects used cooking oil from 200 schools in Cyprus and converts them to biodiesel. The coordinators of the programme, Akti Study and Research Centre and the Ministry of Education and Culture, have acknowledged that specific barrier and proposed a tax exemption. The main consequence of this tax is that used cooking oil collectors from Cyprus are now exporting their oil to Greece because it is more profitable, and the biofuel processing unit on the island cannot run at full capacity. To address this issue, the Parliamentary Committee for Environment has agreed to propose a tax exemption for biofuels (SigmaLive, 2013a).

Additionally, the Minister for Communications and Works, Tasos Mitsopoulos, declared that the promotion of Sustainable Mobility is priority for Cyprus (Γραφείο Τύπου και Πληροφοριών, 2013). This can be achieved with the implementation of the Integrated Mobility Plan for Nicosia, the country’s capital, the design of Integrated Mobility Plans for other cities, and the introduction of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). To that end, the Ministry prepares an action plan with proposed measures and policies that will be eligible for funding through the Cohesion Fund of the EU for the next programmatic period (2014- 2020) (SigmaLive, 2013b).

Waste

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, responsible for the transposition of the Waste Management Directive, announced that, as of June 2013, a draft version of the waste management plan for the domestic sector has been prepared. The plan includes provisions that promote precaution, reduction, separation, recycling, and alternative management of waste. Cyprus has already established two successful waste management pilot programmes, one concerning the implementation of Integrated Management of Organic Waste in different municipalities in Cyprus and the introduction of a “pay-as-you-throw” scheme in the Municipality of Aglantzia (ΗΚαθημερινή, 2013).

5 Policy progress on past CSRs

As part of the European Semester, Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) for each MS are provided by the EU Commission in June of each year for consideration and endorsement by the European Council). The recommendations are designed to address the major challenges facing each country in relation to the targets outlined in the EU 2020 Strategy.

No CSRs related to climate change and energy were issued for Cyprus in 2013.

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