

Meeting of Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum

Minutes

17 May 2022, hybrid

1. Opening statements

The Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum was opened by Mr Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, European Parliament. Mr Buşoi underlined that the objective of the Parliamentary Plenum is to make the Energy Community better equipped to implement the EU energy acquis by bringing together elected members of the national parliaments of the Contracting Parties and the European Parliament in order to solidify a parliamentary dimension in the Energy Community process and ensure parliamentary oversight. He stressed that the involvement of elected members of parliament in the Energy Community process was absolutely key. Mr Buşoi recalled that this year's Plenum is taking place in a dark and difficult period and condemned the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. He underlined Europe's solidarity with Ukraine and recalled that Europe will do its utmost to help.

In her speech, EU Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson, outlined EU actions to counteract short term gas supply risks: upgrading gas supply contingency plans, with Ukraine and Moldova always being part of these plans, refilling gas storages and working together with the EU's neighbours on diversifying supply routes. She also explained the RePowerEU, a plan to make Europe independent from Russian gas by accelerating the energy transition and joining forces to achieve a more resilient power system and a true energy union.

Mr Andriy Gerus, Chairman of the Committee on Energy, Housing and Utilities Services, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and Chairman of the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum 2022, thanked the European Union and its Member States for their support to Ukraine and its energy sector, referring especially to the emergency synchronization of the power system of Ukraine with the Continental European power system and sanctions. He also explained that the current surplus of electricity in Ukraine meant the country had potential to export renewable energy to the EU.

In his statement, Director Artur Lorkowski explained how the Energy Community Secretariat is supporting Ukraine in the current conditions of war. Upon request by the European Commission and in agreement with the Ministry of Energy of Ukraine, the Energy Community Secretariat has set up the legal framework for the Ukraine Energy Support Fund. Moreover, the Ukraine Support Task Force within the Secretariat coordinates donations of specialized energy equipment from energy sector stakeholders. The Energy Community is also actively looking for ways to address vulnerabilities to gas disruptions in South-East Europe. He concluded by underlining that the current crisis presents an opportunity to accelerate the energy transition by speeding up the deployment of energy from renewable sources and the implementation of energy efficiency measures as envisaged by the European Green Deal.

2. Exchange of views on security of energy supply in Europe

The exchange of views focussed on how to strengthen Europe's energy security following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Support for the energy sector of Moldova and Ukraine and enhanced European energy market integration were also discussed. Members of Parliament

called for actions to consolidate the European energy market and improve cross-border interconnection capacities with Contracting Parties.

The issue of rising energy prices and need to increase measures to addresses energy poverty were also underlined. It was noted that the impact of high energy prices is greater in the Energy Community Contracting Parties due to their level of GDP and economic development.

The importance of the opening of EU's common purchase platform and storages for gas to the Energy Community Contracting Parties was welcomed.

3. Exchange of views on delivering on the European Green Deal

Members of Parliament discussed how to jointly deliver on the objectives of the European Green Deal. The Contracting Parties provided an update on the progress they made in boosting energy from renewable sources, improving energy efficiency and other measures to implement the Green Deal. It was underlined that fighting against climate change will at the same time improve air quality and health of citizens.

4. Concluding remarks

The Parliamentary Plenum highlighted that challenges such as strengthening energy security could be tackled more effectively via joint cooperation. It was underlined that the Energy Community is a key instrument of EU external energy policy and the Contracting Parties contribute to the energy security of the European Union.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Members: Arben Pellumbi (Albania), Maia Bitadze (Georgia), David Songulashvili (Georgia), Ferat Shala (Kosovo*), Mimoza Kusari – Lila (Kosovo*), Jovanka Bogavac (Montenegro), Dumitru Alaiba (Moldova), Laze Tanevski (North Macedonia), Zorancho Jovanchev (North Macedonia), Andriy Gerus (Ukraine), Andrii Kit (Ukraine)

European Parliament: Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Jerzy Buzek, Tsvetelina Penkova, Mauri Pekkarinen, Henrike Hahn, Beata Szydło, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Seán Kelly, Christian Ehler, Nicolás González Casares, Jutta Paulus

Energy Community Secretariat: Artur Lorkowski, Dirk Buschle, Barbora Poyner, Peter Pozsgai

Parliamentary Secretariats: Aleksandra Balac, Muhamet Morina, Tijana Knezevic, Nenad Pandurevic, Dragan Pulevski, Costis Yeraris

Speakers: Kadri Simson (European Commission)