

Are NECPs fit to deliver the EU Climate Law? #EUSEW2020 EVENT

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PlanUp: in a nutshell



AIM: support the shift to a climate-neutral and resilient economy through **development and implementation of effective and ambitious 2030 National Climate and Energy Plans.**

PlanUp tracks the development of National Energy & Climate Plans in five EU Member States: Spain, Italy, Poland, Romania and Hungary.

To support rapid decarbonisation in Europe the project **promotes good practices** in the **transport, agriculture and building** sectors and fosters dialogue on low-carbon policymaking between local, regional and national authorities, civil society organizations and academia.



Objectives: a step-by-step approach



1. **Build capacity** of Local Regional Authorities and Civil Society Organisations to engage in the development and implementation of NECPs
2. **Stimulate coordination** between local, regional and national authorities on climate mitigation actions
3. **Ensure dissemination of good practices** and promote well designed, climate-friendly sectoral policies
4. **Improve the understanding of economic and social benefits** of climate mitigation actions through the increased uptake of quantitative modelling tools



The main actions: in progress



Best practice assessment matrix

Establish a PlanUp Platform

Use the EU Calculator to support NECP development

Identify and promote sectoral best practices

Participatory assessment of draft NECPs in five MS

Capacity building CSOs and LRAs on NECP development

Establish a peer learning approach for CSOs and LRAs

Facilitate a multi-layer governance framework

Bottom up monitoring portal for climate policies

Replication and transfer of project results

Monitor project impact and socio-economic impact

Communications strategy and website

Information and awareness raising activities

Networking and technical dissemination

Monitoring, evaluation and learning



Main takeaways 1 year after



1. Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement: a strength or a weakness

“Our government is not willing to listen to civil society and take on board their recommendations. It is a cultural thing; they are seen as weak if they bend to the views of society.”

“There are no records of engagement since the government has never set up a proper consultation process inviting all stakeholders to participate.”

“It is unclear whether the outcome of roundtable discussions will be taken into account”

- Consultation on the draft NECPs was **generally poor and highly differentiated**. Hungary sent a questionnaire out to 130 stakeholders with a month to respond, while Spain only held informal discussions with energy businesses and Romania provided a window of only ten days to respond.
- National roundtables evidenced need for better engagement of government with stakeholders. Ministry officials welcomed contributions from CSOs but did not articulate a role for CSOs in NECP development
- Uneven level of civil society awareness and engagement with decision-makers



Main takeaways 1 year after



2. National governance and institutional setup: a strength or a weakness

“Most countries have a climate change contact. We cannot even name a person at the country level to contact about transport or whatever, and we do not have any data published by government to review. We cannot say if a policy is changing because we don’t know if there is one. This project has enabled us to identify who we should be talking to though and has helped us to make the first contacts.”

- **Lack of information/transparency on institutional roles and responsibilities**
- **Lack of ownership and accountability**
- **Weak policy coordination and monitoring**
- **Decentralization/Centralization of decision-making and administration**
- **Adequacy of resources and management structure (horizontal/vertical)**



Main takeaways 1 year after



3. National policy measures and instruments: lost in process

- Assessment of draft NECPs for the three sectors monitored under the Effort Sharing Regulation (transport, agriculture and buildings) has shown a variety of policy measures and instruments which make comparability very difficult
- The existence of a strong regulatory framework and guidance at European level (for instance in the implementation of the EED) facilitates policy choices. Some national policy measures lack consistency with overall environmental objectives
- The lack of data and information across sectors can be a barrier to identifying most realistic national targets: mismatch between government's estimates and assessments on the energy transition and available factual data
- Many assumptions are still missing back-up information and data on capacity and costs. Cross-check on these issues at regional/local level was often found absent



Feedback on PlanUP: a step in the right direction



- **National workshops:** *“Cities have realized the value of CSOs and their weight in advocating national government in collaboration with Local Authorities” “I totally see the relevance of this kind of monitoring and agree that there has not been much of this to date.”*
- **Roundtables:** *“It was a novel experience in several countries for local and national government and civil society to be brought together in one room.”*
- **Effectiveness of PlanUp products and tools:** *“We need to promote this more widely – I am not sure if anyone in my Ministry knows about this.”*
- **Collaboration between NGOs and LRAs:** *“We have heard that networks that previously existed but were not working well are being better mobilized.” “After this first event, NGOs started to invite national city networks to CSO events.”*



How to drive ambition in the NECPs?



Delivering ambition is a multifaceted challenge requiring a comprehensive approach

Policy coherence

- Reduce political uncertainty: climate-neutrality Yes/No? Binding/non-binding? When? How?
- Link short-term to long-term action (LTS): align NECPs with political objectives and commitments

Stakeholder engagement

- Create social consensus: set up a process to identify, empower and involve all stakeholders timely, through a structured, regular, transparent and continuously monitored dialogue with specific objectives and outcomes

Governance

- Set up a functional institutional framework providing the adequate expertise at local, regional and national level and assigning roles/responsibilities and a coordination structure

Technical knowledge/expertise/skills

- Ensure an effective data/information/science gathering as a basis for strategic decisions (EC/national environment and energy agencies/academia etc. support needed)



The Climate Law and the NECPs: fit for purpose?



A potential policy landmark but more is needed in the Climate Law proposal to drive ambition in the NECPs

- Urgency** of stepping up 2030 climate ambition
- Climate-neutrality **embedded** in the NECPs
- Measures **not to be deferred** to 2024 based on voluntary efforts taken by Member States to implement a generic carbon neutrality target, based on a “wait and see” approach
- Enforcement** measures must ensure NECPs’ alignment with emission reduction trajectory
- Policy coherence**, i.e. establish **interlinkages** with legislation across sectors (agriculture, biodiversity, industry, buildings, transport etc) and policy areas (GHG emissions, circular economy, air/water/soil pollution) is key to facilitate effective and consistent national policy measures
- A robust mechanism and **accountable process and a high level of transparency** in the chain of responsibility of the processes are needed to ensure that the trajectories and the targets are met by the Union and the Member States coherently and in a coordinated way and with the **full support and endorsement** by all sectors of society
- Concrete measures (a “**Strategic Action Plan**”) to meet the objectives to guide and facilitate Member States, reduce policy failures risks and timely address barriers such as required tools, including technical expertise and knowledge-based support



NECPs and the Recovery Plan: how will money be spent?



A game changer, but with some looming question marks

- **Next Generation EU** includes a new Recovery and Resilience Facility building on the European Semester and **National Energy and Climate Plans** as a basis for funded reforms.
- Under Next Generation EU's pillar one, the **Just Transition Fund** supporting carbon-dependent regions through the green transition would be increased from €7.5bn to €40bn.
- Investments made through the recovery plan **should respect the “green oath” to “do no harm”**.
- **Agriculture:** budget for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is reinforced by €15 billion, with a view to supporting the earlier announced green objectives in the new biodiversity and Farm to Fork strategies, but... **agriculture funds still** need to be made conditional to the achievement of climate, environmental, and societal targets, and redirected to support farmers in need.



NECPs and the Recovery Plan: how will money be spent?



A game changer, but with some looming question marks

- **Buildings:** need for a dedicated instrument to “at least double the annual renovation rate” of existing building stock, improving energy efficiency under the next upcoming “renovation wave” for buildings and infrastructure not identified
- **Transport:** general commitment to boost production of “sustainable vehicles” and alternative fuels and funding for one million electric vehicle charging points but no common definitions of what constitutes “climate spending” (25% as by proposal) or “sustainable vehicles”.

On top

- Pending endorsement by MS and EP, date of entry into force ?
- Risk of back-tracking on ambition (governments, political parties, industry)
- Old assumptions no longer valid
- Delays in MS evaluation
- MFF not yet approved
- How MS will embed the Recovery Plan money into national economic programmes.
- CSO's involvement





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