



**BRINGING THE EU TOGETHER  
ON CLIMATE ACTION**

# BASELINE STUDY



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## **UNIFY : Bringing the EU together on climate action Project Baseline Study**

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The analysis is based on publicly available information such as governmental announcements or draft policies, measures and documents presented at the national level for consultation purposes, as well as NGOs' expert opinion. It was concluded in mid-November 2019. Any developments after that date have not been taken into account.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

EEA.....	European Environment Agency
EU.....	European Union
ETS.....	Emission Trading Scheme
IPCC.....	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LULUCF.....	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
LTS.....	Long-Term Strategies
NGOs.....	Non- Governmental Organisations
NECP.....	National Energy and Climate Plans
nLTS.....	National Long-Term Strategies
OPCC.....	Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion
SECAP.....	Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans

## **OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE BASELINE REVIEW**

This report provides, in the beginning of the Unify project, a snapshot of where the EU and its 10 Member States stand in terms of:

- 2030 climate and energy targets and their level of ambition compared to the 1.5°C objective of the Paris Agreement
- Consistencies/ inconsistencies of national long-term plans and short- to medium-term climate and energy policies,
- Level of funding for Climate & Energy targets,
- National capacities and level of public participation for the development of strategic documents

The information shared in this document is based on publicly available information such as previous NGO reports, governmental announcements or new draft policies and plans presented at the national level for consultation purposes. It also includes Unify project partners' country analyses.

It was concluded in mid-November 2019. Any developments after that date have not been taken into account.

## **CLIMATE POLICIES IN EUROPE AND IMPACTS OF THE UNIFY PROJECT**

Climate change already has severe impacts on ecosystems, the economy, human health and well-being of the people around the world, including in Europe. Europeans are increasingly exposed to severe heat waves, droughts and lives and livelihoods are lost in forest fires. The melting of glaciers and snow cover are impacting tourism and agriculture. Indigenous people, as well as millions of small farmers whose lives depend on the stability of natural ecosystems are affected by the climate crisis.

By adopting the Paris Agreement in 2015, the world, including EU countries, decided to pursue efforts to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Nevertheless, countries' current commitments, including the EU's climate target to reduce its emissions to at least 40% by 2030, are projected to only limit warming at best to 3.2°C.

While signing the Paris Agreement in 2015, all countries knew that their commitments were falling short of the 1.5°C objective of the Agreement and they promised to update their pledges in 2020.

In 2018, the IPCC report "Global Warming of 1.5°C" made it crystal clear that if countries are serious to achieve the 1.5°C objective of the Paris Agreement, there must be urgent and unprecedented policy changes.

*“Unify: Bringing the EU together on Climate Action”* project aims to showcase through its targeted activities in 10 Member States, that unifying three key EU policy processes (National Energy and Climate Plans, national Long Term Strategies and the EU budget) could help all EU countries to step up climate action.

This project will be realised during a crucial time of the European climate policy making process. During the Unify project period, different components of the European Green Deal – the new European Commission’s flagship initiative – will be unveiled and relevant legislative changes will be realised. The European Green Deal aims to increase the EU’s immediate term climate target (2030 climate target), a Climate Law to enshrine the target of reaching net-zero carbon by 2050 and a Just Transition Mechanism to facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy.

For the next three years, the Unify project and its activities in 10 countries aim to facilitate the early transition to a low carbon economy. By showcasing the importance of alignment between the national and the EU’s long-term strategies, National Energy and Climate Plans and the local level climate and energy action plans (SECAPs), the Unify project aims to show the importance of consistency in climate action at different levels. Its deliverables would definitely support the discussions initiated by the Commission’s European Green Deal initiative on the increase of the 2030 climate target, use of EU budget for climate action and national level short- to long-term planning.

The Unify project builds processes and capacity to monitor the programming of EU funds, providing targeted inputs at the regional, national, and sub-national level to ensure that Partnership Agreements and Operational Funds are coherent with National Energy and Climate Plans at the national level and Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans at the municipal level. Simultaneously, Unify assesses the coherence of Member States’ Long-Term Strategies to push for alignment with National Climate and Energy Plans and local level Sustainable Climate and Energy Plans (SECAPs).

Through its work on NECPs, the Unify project aims to prove that National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) are a key tool for Member States in their preparation for a new, much higher climate target for 2030. [According to Unify project’s first national stocktake](#), draft NECPs as they stand are not ambitious enough to meet a higher climate target, but they can still be improved. More ambitious national climate plans will facilitate the much-needed deep emission cuts at the EU level. As an example, the Danish government adopted a target of reducing emissions by 70% by 2030 and is revising the NECP to align the policies and measures with higher ambition. This proves that when there is political will, governments can make unprecedented policy changes.

## COUNTRY ANALYSIS

### CROATIA

Croatia has an overall greenhouse gas emission target of 7% by 2030 compared to 2005 for non-ETS sectors (transport, buildings, waste and agriculture). The information included in the NECPs deviates considerably from the European Environment Agency's (EEA) data, but both suggest that Croatia will achieve the required emissions reductions with existing measures only. Croatia sets a renewable energy contribution of 36.4% in 2030, starting with a share of 28.3% in 2020, which is however lower than what the country already achieved in 2015. The level of energy consumption foreseen in the draft plan for 2030 amounts to 8.8 Mtoe of primary energy and 6.8 Mtoe of final energy.

According to NGO comments, the Croatian NECP has been made in a rush, lacks ambition and is not addressing some of the comments from the public and the European Commission.

The most important recommendations of the European Commission were about renewable energy measures not being specific and detailed enough and also underlining the need to reduce the primary and final energy consumption, while including a more detailed analysis of costs and financing sources.

Besides, the public consultation on the first draft NECP was open only for 8 days and the draft NECP was sent around to individual experts on specific topics, but not to a wide range of stakeholders from different sectors. For the second draft, meaning the version which was supposed to take into account the Commission's recommendations, the Ministry realised a public consultation for a month between October- November 2019.

In the NECPs, there is already a clear link with the EU budget, with several measures envisaged to be funded with the European Structural and Investment Fund. Based on previous NGO analysis, it is clear that the major obstacle in the process of implementation of measures is the lack of appropriate funding. Therefore, the Unify project's approach of building capacities for the appropriate use of EU funding for the increased and urgent climate action could create a new dynamic for the country. The Croatian Unify project partner, DOOR, is included in national committees for the revision of Operational Programmes on competitiveness and cohesion funds. In addition, DOOR has representatives in the Committee on monitoring of the implementation of the measures funded under OPCC.

In 2018, there was a public debate in Croatia regarding the possibilities of achieving climate neutrality by 2030. At that moment, 2 analysis whose findings were taken as a basis for the development of the energy strategy were completed. Other than this discussion and the public consultation for the NECP drafting process, there has been no public debate or commitment to increase 2030 climate target.

Regarding local level of climate action in the country, municipalities/cities are interested to develop their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) through their own funds or through dedicated EU funds, as it's the only available fund that can be used for

SECAPs. In the Croatian NECP, one of the measures envisages financial support to the municipalities and cities for the development of SECAPs. Unify project partner, DOOR, has already worked on SECAPs with 4 Croatian cities and is planning to build up on its previous experiences to encourage more cities/municipalities to develop their own plans.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

The Czech Republic's target is to reduce its emissions (both ETS and non-ETS) by 30% by 2030 compared to 2005. This means reduction of 44 million tonne CO<sub>2</sub>e. Its energy consumption target is to reach 1727 PJ in primary consumption and 990 PJ in final consumption in 2030.

After receiving recommendations from the Commission on its draft NECP, the government has added some further measures. In the second draft, Czech Republic increased its renewable energy contribution from 20.8% to 22%, a level of ambition which is still below the level indicated in the assessment from the Commission. The level of primary energy consumption for 2030 was slightly higher. Besides, Czech Republic added a list of policies and measures to achieve emission reductions in the transport, agriculture, waste management, industry, energy and household sectors. However, most of the policies listed are part of already agreed strategic plans or plans that are already in the pipeline. Therefore, additional policies and measures are limited.

In addition, in its new draft NECP, the Czech government identified only one type of fossil fuel subsidy, which is the housing allowance for socially disadvantaged people, often used for housing with coal-burning stoves. The government is planning to amend the rules of this allowance to support more environmentally friendly ways of household heating. However, the NECP does not include any information on other (indirect) fossil fuel subsidies that benefit fossil companies, even though these are substantial.

Even though the Czech government has taken into account some recommendations from the Commission, it still seems to be doing the bare minimum in terms of drafting the NECP roughly in line with current goals. Besides, the decision makers are still dragging their feet on any possible increase of the EU's 2030 climate target. For instance, even the updated Czech NECP doesn't unlock the potential for low-carbon transformation, especially in the development of renewable energy and due to its low ambition in the buildings/savings sector.

The Czech government has published the long-term Climate Protection Policy in 2017 which contains an indicative goal of 80% greenhouse gas reduction by 2050. However, it is currently unclear if the government will use this plan as their national long-term strategy or if they will present a new document that takes into account the EU's climate neutrality by 2050 objective. As there has not been a public consultation process recently, NGOs are still trying to figure out the process about the national long-term strategy.

In terms of public consultations to both processes, there was often limited information about them and limited time to participate and comment. Therefore, NGOs need to monitor it closely and make sure they get their comments posted in time. This is mainly done through online forms or via email. Often, the comments were not taken into account.

Regarding the link between the EU funds and climate and energy plans, the national debate is mostly focusing on how the recently announced Just Transition Mechanism can provide extra funding to the coal mining regions to help with their transition.

To bring national and European climate and energy policies to the local level, municipalities and cities would need some support and capacity building. At the national level, the drafting and implementation of SECAPs is largely left upon the involved municipalities, including securing the necessary capacities and funding. Therefore, the Unify project might play an important role by ensuring that national and local climate action plans are consistent and help overachieving European climate targets.

## **DENMARK**

Denmark's draft NECP which was submitted in December 2018, included an objective to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions for non-ETS sectors (such as transport, buildings, waste and agriculture) by 39% by 2030 compared to 2005. Besides, Denmark had a renewable energy contribution of 55% in 2030. The starting point in 2020 is 42% which is higher than the country's 2020 target (30%). The level of energy consumption had foreseen for 2030 amounts to 18.6 Mtoe of primary energy and 15.8 Mtoe of final energy.

However, after the elections in June 2019, the new Danish government adopted a target of 70% greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2030. This new target, which is expected to be adopted by law in December 2019, will require a revision of the draft NECP that Denmark submitted previously.

Danish NGOs expect to see an intermediate draft NECP during the first week of November 2019. NGOs will have about 10 days to submit written comments. Following this public consultation process, the government is planning to submit its updated NECP to the European Commission in December 2019. Danish stakeholders are concerned that very little of their comments will be addressed, as the time dedicated to incorporate stakeholder comments is very short.

On the national 2050 target, prior to the change of government the Danish Parliament agreed on a target of both Denmark and the EU reaching "net-zero by 2050 at the latest". This could still move forward, but currently the national focus is on the increase of 2030 target and delivering on two national promises: firstly, enacting the Danish climate law and secondly, a climate action plan on how to achieve the immediate and longer-term climate targets in the climate law.

In terms of public participation, it is also important to note that ahead of European Council meetings, stakeholders have an opportunity to review and comment on the government positions before the Minister asks the Parliament for mandate. These consultations would help mainstreaming the principles of the Unify project.

On the use of EU funds for climate action, there is a misperception in the public regarding how Denmark can benefit from these funds. As Denmark is one of the net-payers to the EU funds, many people believe that the country only contributes and doesn't receive any EU funds. One of the achievements of the Unify project would be to raise awareness at the

national level regarding how the EU funds, including the Cohesion Policy funds, and the upcoming Just Transition Funds could help the country to step up climate action and overachieve its targets.

## **ESTONIA**

According to the “General Principles of Climate Policy until 2050” document, the Estonian 2030 target is circa -70% greenhouse gas emissions reduction compared to 1990 levels. It looks very ambitious, however, however, we must keep in mind that current emission levels have been the same since 1993 (i.e. [Estonia achieved -50% of reduction already in 1993](#))

Currently, the public pressure on the need to increase climate action grows, partly thanks to a citizens' initiative calling Estonia to become climate neutral by 2035 - which will be discussed in the Parliament in the next months.

For Estonia, the revised draft NECP includes updated greenhouse gas emission reduction projections with additional measures but it currently is not in a format that clearly presents the emission reductions in the non-ETS sectors as a whole. Besides, the updated version of the Estonian NECP included more information on developing renewable resources and additional measures. Even though some very good new measures are under discussion, they are not concretely planned yet.

The EU process on climate neutrality was the main driver that encouraged the Estonian government to make climate action a priority. Hence, the government was one of the last EU Member States to support the climate neutrality by 2050 objective. Unfortunately, the General Principles of Climate Policy for 2050 document, which is known as the national Long-Term Strategy has not been updated yet. It would need to be updated but unfortunately, no information is available about its timeline.

It is also encouraging to see that in the public debate, there is already a link between the country's climate ambition and updating its NECP and national Long-Term Strategy. Unfortunately, the same link doesn't exist on how the EU funds could spur climate action. The Unify project aims to also develop capacities and raise awareness among national stakeholders and decision-makers on this issue.

For the public consultation, there is a formal procedure put in place by relevant ministries. Usually, the document is put up on relevant websites for comments and sometimes discussed in different events. However, the challenge is that there is often too little time to comment and many comments are not taken into account.

## FRANCE

France aims to reduce its non-ETS sector greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. This target has been adopted in 2015 in the energy transition law and has been confirmed in the Energy and Climate Law adopted in late 2019.

However, since Macron announced France's support to increase the EU's immediate term climate target to -55% by 2030, France would also need to increase its domestic target.

In its recommendations to the French NECP, the Commission highlighted that with existing policies and measures France is projected to fall short of its 2030 non-ETS target by 11 percentage points. This is still the case despite the additional measures taken in the recently adopted Mobility and Energy and Climate laws. Policies and measures included in the new legislation are not in line with the target of reaching 40% emission reduction by 2030. New measures are needed, and the 3 main aspects that need to be improved are: mobility measures to support a modal shift, energy efficiency measures, and a fossil fuel phaseout plan.

France has a long-term objective to reach climate neutrality by 2050. The country also supports the EU to become climate neutral by the same date. As the country has published its Long-Term Strategy as part of the NECP, no other document is expected.

In terms of public consultations to NECP and national Long-Term Strategy submission, France organised a first consultation in the spring/summer of 2018. The second round of consultation ends at the end of 2019. The public consultations are mostly done via the internet, but also through the Public Debate Agency, which is in charge of organising public debate on certain topics across the country. This has been the case for the energy part of the NECPs, for which many debates have been organised among others at universities, public places.

It is also important to note that a new form of consultation, the Citizens' Assembly for climate, has been launched in autumn of 2019. For this assembly, citizens are selected with a random draw. The Assembly aims at working on the best policies and solutions to have a socially fair transition in order to reach 2030 climate targets. The goal is to improve social acceptability of climate policies. The French Citizens' Assembly is currently working on the conditions to reach "at least" -40% by 2030 and the government has committed to translate the proposed solutions into legislation in France.

In France, even though there is a common sense that the EU budget should support increasing the EU's climate ambition, there is not enough awareness on the link between the programming of EU funds and climate and energy issues. Unify aims to build capacity and raise awareness in the country on the potential of EU funds to step up climate action.

Since 2015, every French municipality of more than 20.000 inhabitants has to develop and implement a SECAP. The deadline for this was December 2018, but in reality, a lot of municipalities are still drafting them. In terms of process, the first step is to diagnose the current situation, the second one is to define the objectives and action program, and the last

step is public consultation and evaluation of the region's potential. Unify partner RAC France is working with mayors' networks and local government networks and already have a good network among the city organisations.

## GERMANY

Germany currently fails to reach its 2020 target of 40% greenhouse gas emissions reduction compared to 1990 levels. Therefore, ensuring that the country will meet its 2030 climate target to reduce 55% of its greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels is currently a very sensitive and important public debate.

In November 2019, German government has adopted a Climate Law to reach climate neutrality by 2050. The law confirms the current national climate target of 55% greenhouse gas emission reduction by 2030 and is accompanied by a package of measures in particular for the non-ETS sectors. Although a number of these measures have transformative potential, the overall package is quite weak. According to many stakeholders and scientists, the measures in the package are not enough to reach even the current national emissions reduction target for 2030.

According to its draft NECP, Germany plans to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in sectors such as transport, buildings, waste and agriculture (non-ETS sectors) by 38% compared to 2005 by 2030, as required by the EU effort sharing regulation. On this point, the Commission issued a recommendation to specify cost-efficient additional policies and measures, to address the significant projected gap to its greenhouse gas target for sectors not covered by the EU emissions trading system for 2030 of -38 % compared to 2005.

The renewable energy contribution is set at 30% for 2030, starting with a share of 18% in 2020, which is the same as the country's 2020 target. On this point, the Commission has also recommended to provide detailed and quantified policies and measures; in line with the country obligations.

The draft plan refers to a primary energy consumption level of 230 Mtoe in 2030, linked to the long-term target of 50% reduction of primary energy consumption by 2050. However, the plan does not provide a clear indication of final energy consumption. The Federal Government has said that it will conduct an impact assessment analysis specifically for the final NECP to comply with the recommendations of the European Commission.

The draft NECP has been consulted for one month during summer. However, its updated version which was expected to take into account the Commission recommendations hasn't been shared with stakeholders.

In 2016, a guidance document on the long-term climate strategies, the Climate Action Plan 2050 (Klimaschutzplan 2050) was published and considered as the Long-Term Strategy. The Plan was centred around the long-term goal to "largely pursue the aim of greenhouse gas neutrality by 2050". These targets are once again confirmed in the recently published German Climate Law.

Since summer 2019, Germany joined the Member States who were advocating for the EU to reach climate neutrality by 2050. This has helped progressive forces (inside and outside the government) to link to the debate at national level and reach more ambition than "extensive neutrality".

## **POLAND**

According to the draft National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), Poland plans to reduce its non-ETS sectors greenhouse gas emissions by 7% by 2030 compared to 2005. The renewable energy contribution is set at 21% in 2030.

The Polish Unify project partner, Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD), has conducted an extensive assessment of the Polish NECP. According to this assessment, hard coal/lignite energy production and transport sectors, as they stand in the document, seem particularly problematic.

In its recommendations, the Commission requested the Polish government to:

- present actions to achieve objectives in the non-ETS sectors
- raise the renewable energy target to 25%
- guarantee the achievement of a 15% share of renewables in 2020, intensify efforts to improve energy efficiency
- provide a list of all energy subsidies
- taking better account of aspects of fair and just transition

However, it is clear that the government is not intending to respond to all of the Commission recommendations in its final NECP.

Public debate in the country to raise climate ambition is very complicated and limited. Coal dependency of the country and the clear and important need for EU funding to ensure a just and fair transition of coal dependent regions are the main limitations of the country's climate ambition.

In the September Energy Council, Poland said that it is not going to increase the level of ambition of its contribution. However, in its recently published draft energy strategy for 2040, Poland foresees a range in the share of renewable energy between 21% and 23% (dependent on the EU's financial support). This should be further increased and reflected in the final NECP.

Regarding the country's national long-term strategy, NGOs and other stakeholders are informed that government has been working on it. However, there hasn't been a public consultation process and it is not clear when it will be submitted to the Commission.

On the public consultation process, the documents which are under consultation are usually transparent with full access through Internet websites of the ministries responsible for the published policy document. Occasionally, the relevant ministries can organise regional consultation meetings, however, it is not very common.

In the country, there is a high-level public awareness on the need to use EU funds to enhance current climate and energy policies. Hence, the link between finance and climate action is strong and clear. Poland is currently focusing on using EU funds on renewable energy along the EU guidelines and thus, on the other hand, reserves itself the right to use national funds otherwise. This situation is usually criticised by NGOs.

Regarding the local level climate action in Poland, even though there is no legislation or regulation regarding development and implementation of SECAPs, the Ministry of Environment is coordinating the work based on its ministerial guidelines.

Based on Unify project partner ISD's previous experience, many municipalities are not very eager to prepare SECAPs as there are limited tools in energy management. As tools for monitoring and implementation of adaptation measures are better developed, this section is usually more elaborated than energy measures. The Unify project aims to close the gap by supporting municipalities to better integrate national climate and energy measures to their local level plans.

## **PORTUGAL**

Portugal is the first country in the world to announce its aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Its draft NECP has been developed in coherence with its national long-term goal as the national long-term strategic roadmap defines target milestones for 2020, 2030, 2040 and 2050.

According to the Portuguese NECP, the country has a binding target of 17% greenhouse gas emission reduction in the non-ETS sectors (for sectors such as transport, buildings, waste and agriculture) by 2030 compared to 2005. The country also sets a renewable energy contribution of 47% in 2030, starting with a share of 31% in 2020. The level of energy consumption foreseen for 2030 amounts to 20.2 Mtoe of primary energy and 17.7 Mtoe of final energy. For final energy, this means a similar level of consumption as the 2020 energy efficiency target and an increase compared to today.

According to national NGOs, there are some topics that could still be improved in the final Portuguese NECP: defining a date to end fossil fuel subsidies, earlier closure of coal power plants, definition of measures to tackle energy poverty, need to increase ambition of some targets (particularly the energy efficiency target), and stricter measures in some problematic sectors such as transport and buildings.

These NGO recommendations are mostly overlapping with the Commission's recommendations. The government has shown willingness to address the recommendations issued both by the European Commission and NGOs.

Currently, at the national level there is a public debate on enhancing the NECP in some sectors to increase the national 2030 climate target. At this point, the EU funds programming plays a crucial role, mainly to support municipalities and other local/regional authorities to implement measures to meet the NECP targets as national funds are insufficient to ensure the much-needed energy transition.

To meet the goal of becoming a carbon neutral economy by 2050, the government has prepared a national plan called Roadmap for Carbon Neutrality 2050. This Roadmap document was formally approved on the 1st July 2019, by a Resolution of the Ministers' Council and supported by the Parliament. It is not enshrined in law, but a guidance document for future policies. A climate law to enshrine the climate neutrality objective is subject to an ongoing debate now and there is already some level of consensus across parties in the National Parliament to bring the issue to the parliament.

Due to elections in October 2019, the public consultation on the Roadmap had to happen sooner in order to incorporate comments in the final document before an eventual governmental change. The public consultation of both the Roadmap and its Environmental Strategic Assessment were conducted between end 2018 and mid-2019.

Regarding the local level climate action, currently 163 Portuguese municipalities have signed the Covenant of Mayors. In the development of SECAPs, they are mostly supported by regional and national authorities, mainly by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Action.

Unify project partner ZERO has strong knowledge and technical expertise on all the above-mentioned policy processes. The organisation, whose technical expertise is valued by many, facilitates the discussions with decision makers.

## **SLOVENIA**

Slovenia has the binding target of 15% emission reduction in 2030 compared to 2005 for sectors such as transport, buildings, waste and agriculture (non-ETS sectors). The country sets a renewable energy contribution of 27% in 2030, starting in 2020 with a share of 25% which is the same as the country's 2020 target. The draft NECP also refers to a level of primary energy consumption that amounts to 7.05 Mtoe in 2030 but does not indicate a level of consumption for final energy.

Even though in several public statements, the government stated that more can be achieved, there are no new targets mentioned or opened for discussion.

After receiving the Commission's recommendations, the country has made some minor improvements in its NECP, especially by better presenting policies and measures in the transport sector. Nevertheless, the NECP is still considered insufficient by the NGOs and recommended to increase current climate and energy targets, improve transport policies, include commitments to phase out fossil fuel subsidies, and a timeline for coal phase out.

The newest version of the Slovenian NECP is published in November 2019 and public consultation will take place in December and January 2020. The ongoing strategic environmental assessment is announced as the official reason of delay.

In terms of public consultation process, national stakeholders are given the possibility to comment during 60 days after a draft has been published, as well as invited to give opinions at public events and workshops. NGOs can also take part in strategic environmental

assessment process. Relevant ministries who are coordinating these planning processes are either having regular meetings with NGOs or open to meet with stakeholders including NGOs.

In terms of aligning different target levels and implementing policies, Unify partner FOCUS does see a clear link between raising the ambition of national 2030 target and enhancing the NECP - mainly then with a focus on raising the targets for energy efficiency and renewable energy. However, regarding the alignment of long-term strategies and short-term plans (NECPs) and using the EU funds to increase climate ambition; these are not at all topics for public debate in the country.

One of the main reasons of this lack of holistic approach is that the country hasn't prepared its national Long-Term Strategy yet. Recently, an inter-ministerial working group was set up but unfortunately there has not been any consultation yet.

Regarding the local level climate action, in Slovenia, municipalities must prepare local energy concepts. The methodology regarding what these concepts should contain are very similar to SECAPs. Most of them are prepared by regional energy agencies, some by other actors. The Ministry of Infrastructure sets the methodology and guidelines. Unify project partner FOCUS plans to meet with two energy agencies to get a better insight into how these documents can be expanded to SECAPs.

One of the biggest contributions of Unify project for the Slovenian context would be to raise awareness on the importance of policy consistencies at the local, national and the EU level.

## **SPAIN**

Spain has a higher target for greenhouse gas emission reductions in the non- ETS sectors (such as agriculture, buildings, waste and transport) than its binding target under EU law. However, it is still linked to a low level of overall emission reduction target of 20% compared to 1990 levels by 2030 and criticised by NGOs for its lack of ambition.

In its recommendations, the Commission addressed energy efficiency, fossil fuel subsidies and LULUCF which were also underlined by national stakeholders. It is now expected to have a consultation on an intermediate draft, which addresses the Commission's recommendations and possibly some issues underlined by national stakeholders and NGOs during the consultation exercise and afterwards (especially on the overall ambition).

However, the long-lasting political uncertainty (failure to form a government after elections in April; further elections on November 10<sup>th</sup>) had created some changes on timeline and consultation process of the final NECP.

For instance, currently it remains unclear whether or not the proposed new coalition government, if successful, will propose a further draft NECP. If it is done, much greater progress on renewable energy is needed to bring the country's emissions below the 1990 baseline (in 2018, overall Spanish emissions were still 15% higher than in 1990). In all cases, no further information is publicly available yet.

Unify project partner SEO Birdlife was told informally to expect a second public consultation on the draft NECP and draft LTS sometime in October. It now looks likely that this may be delayed until after the election on November 10th, and the NECP consultation will only be on the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the plan, not the plan itself. This might restart the 2030 climate ambition debate in Spain – which is currently led by civil society, but also by concerned private sector companies (energy companies, vehicle sector), from local and regional authorities, as well as trade unions affected by decarbonization (coal plant closure; shift from internal combustion to electric vehicles).

Spain's national Long-Term target, communicated in the draft NECP, is -90% by 2050 compared to 1990, and net zero emissions by 2050 including removals. There is very little linkage in the public debate about the link to the EU's long-term strategy and how to collectively achieve it. However, in specialist meetings sectoral and government representatives look to other Member States to be more ambitious in emissions reductions to help the EU reach its targets.

Currently, there is no draft national Long-Term Strategy available and its consultation is still expected before the end of the year. One initial public consultation (spring 2019) was held on very broad issues for the national long-term strategy, but as there has been no government formed after the April elections, the issue has not advanced further.

## CONCLUSIONS

This report presents a baseline assessment made for each project partner country, as well as some topline messages about the EU level climate policies and targets.

Based on the publicly available information and project partners' assessments from 10 Member States, it is clear that there are big differences in terms of public debate related to climate issues, countries' climate and target levels, their use of EU funds for climate action, public consultation processes and knowledge of local authorities related to the national and the EU climate policy processes. Particularly, between Central Eastern European countries where the EU funds play an important role in filling investment gaps to step up climate action and other Member States, there is a specific difference when it comes to awareness of the use of EU funds for increasing climate action.

This variety of processes, ambition level regarding targets, policies and dedicated funds allows the Unify project to have a better overview on position and priorities related to climate policies in the EU and its Member States.

Besides, 6 countries where the Unify project will operate will hold the EU's rotating Council presidency during the project period. The list can be seen below:

Croatia	January-June	2020
Germany	July-December	2020
Portugal	January-June	2021
Slovenia	July-December	2021
France	January-June	2022
Czech Republic	July-December	2022

Thanks to the capacities created by the Unify project, all project partners will have a better overview on the priorities of different Member States and be well positioned to support national decision-makers to link the EU and national level policies – especially during their EU presidencies.

The project will build capacities to increase consistency between different levels of policies and measures to overachieve the current 2030 climate target, in order to ensure that the EU meets its objective under the Paris Agreement. The EU must increase its 2030 climate target to 65% and reach climate neutrality by 2040 in order to do its fair share to meet the 1.5°C objective of the Paris Agreement.