

# BUILDING CAPACITY FOR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM CLIMATE PLANNING IN VISEGRAD 4+2

Project duration:  
November 2019-December 2021



Supported by:



based on a decision of the German Bundestag

# Background and objectives



## From 2019 to 2021: Where are we now?

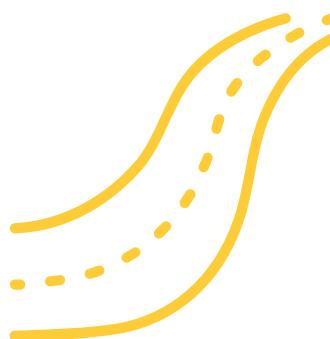
In December 2019 the European Union adopted the 2050 climate neutrality target. Despite this, Central Eastern European decision makers have been struggling with the concept of fully decarbonising their Member States' economy in the next few decades as CEE governments perceive the process of the zero carbon transition as a challenge that comes with increased economic and social costs. In general, the energy transition discussions in the region have been centred around the short-term perspective towards 2030, without reaching beyond this next – even if crucial – decade, and have been limited to engagement in several, mainly expert, stakeholders groups, not entering broad public debate and bit engaging society. At the same time, however, these countries haven't made full use of the available EU funding in order to advance climate action at the national level. They should use opportunities arising from the fact that the European recovery strategy to combat the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on European economies and societies, and increase resilience put the European Green Deal into greater focus.

This has been accompanied by additional financial resources to take ambitious climate action and fasten the energy transition in a just way which should be fully utilised by the Central European Member States to meet these objectives.

The EU 2050 climate neutrality target has been translated into the Climate Law, followed by the decision to increase the EU 2030 climate target to reach at least -55% net emission reduction. During 2021 the European Commission announced a package of legislative proposals to translate this target into practice. There is still a lot of scepticism in CEE about introducing ambitious climate policies and measures as a route for economic and social development. Despite this, the European Green Deal has managed to become an important topic of public debate; a more general, cross-sectoral approach is rising, addressing decarbonisation of sectors such as transport, agriculture and buildings/heating.

Transparency and participation are at the core of these debates when it comes to assessing the veracity and robustness of such processes.

# 2050



## Approach: Why have we developed our project?

According to the EU Governance Regulation, Member States were required to prepare (and submit to the European Commission by 1 January 2020) national long-term strategies (LTS) to present their climate and energy transition pathway, with a perspective of at least 30 years, towards the target of the EU 2050 climate neutrality.

This project aimed to improve the quality of these long-term decarbonisation strategies in six Central Eastern European countries – Czechia, Hungary, Poland, as well as Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia – in several dimensions:

- By developing an **nLTS assessment methodology** as a necessary tool to compare different nLTS documents and assess them against the EU's long-term strategy and the objectives of the Paris Agreement;
- By initiating and enhancing a **multi-stakeholder dialogue** on a **cross-sectoral approach** to long-term planning (developing policy coherence across different policy areas and throughout time);
- By establishing and improving **connections between NGOs and various stakeholders** at national levels in Poland, Czechia and Hungary, regionally (including Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria), as well as with the key EU actors, to exchange and bring closer various perspectives in order to increase mutual understanding and enrich climate and energy debates at different levels;
- To develop a positive narrative on the co-benefits of climate action and energy transition **for the economy and society**.

# Results and recommendations



## What have we done?

>We jointly developed **a national long-term strategies assessment methodology** - “nLTS qualitative tool” - consisting of following pillars:

- Paris Compatibility: long-term objective (Emissions Trading System & Effort Sharing Regulation removals), date for climate neutrality target, use of offsets & loopholes;
- Decarbonisation: targets for energy efficiency and renewable energy, phase-out date for fossil fuel and fossil fuel subsidies, phase-out date for fuel and diesel cars;
- Consistency: trajectories and projections, and policies and measures;
- Budget: financing, and carbon pricing mechanisms;
- Transparency: Public Participation, accountability & monitoring.

The process of building this methodology was developed by regularly gathering feedback from both the European Commission as well as national decision makers in order to make this tool effective and useful.

We established national multi-stakeholder „Support Groups” that have regularly exchanged on the crucial EU climate and energy files and moments to identify linkages with national strategies, policies and debates. We talked about:

- The importance of ambitious and comprehensive national long-term strategies;
- Ways to translate and positively address “Fit for 55” package in the Central Eastern European contexts;
- Climate strategies (national long-term strategies, NECPs), joint and/or individual assessment of these;
- Climate mainstreaming in spending plans (Recovery and Resilience Facility, Cohesion Funds, Just Transition Fund etc.);
- Design of and preparation for the project closing conference (Hungary).

 We organized four regional workshops with several Central Eastern European and EU stakeholders to jointly discuss and develop recommendations on:

- How to improve the quality of long-term strategies debates and strengthen the stakeholder engagement in this process in Poland, Czechia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia;
- How to strengthen participatory processes in development and implementation of climate and energy strategies in CEE;
- How to make climate action happen and finance climate and clean energy strategies and measures through Recovery and Resilience Plans and Cohesion Policy programming in the region; and
- How to cultivate Just Transition in Central and Eastern Europe to make it a reality.

 We published reports and briefings, organised sectoral webinars, high-level events and „Virtual Study Tours to Brussels”

- Our media briefing “Paris Agreement aligned long term strategies are the best guide for economic recovery” (May 2020)

analysed how economic recovery packages could support the early transition to low carbon economies in Europe and how the ambition level of national long term strategies could be increased with sustainable stimulus packages, aimed at achieving the Paris Agreement goals.



#### 4 Workshops

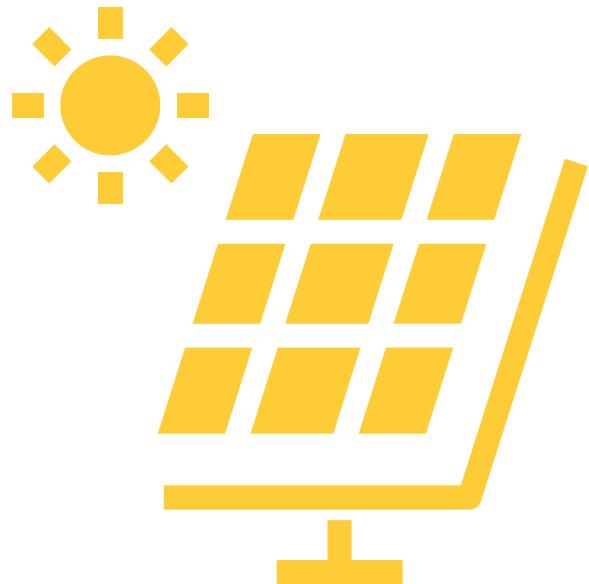


**20 speakers from 9 Central Eastern European countries** representing national public administration, regional authorities and associations, think-tanks, NGOs



over **80 participants** from across the region

- Op-ed “Time for Paris-compatible coal phase-out plans in Central and Eastern Europe”, published in Euractiv in June 2021, analysed the opportunities of setting ambitious coal phase-out dates for increase of the long-term climate planning strategies.
- Report “Getting the long-term planning right: The role of national long-term strategies in achieving climate neutrality in Europe” (September 2021) presented assessment of 8 European nLTS as well as recommendations for both EU institutions as well as Member States for their improvement.
- The “CEE nLTS briefing” (December 2021) focused on positive elements of the long-term climate strategies in the region and lessons learnt in the process of their drafting that could be useful for the future revision of these documents.
- At the high-level webinar on "Accelerating climate action in the EU and Member States through the Fit for 55 package and National Plans" (October 2021) representatives of the EU institutions, Member States, think tanks, business associations and civil society discussed together how the “Fit for 55” package can further increase the EU's climate ambition and accelerate the energy transition in the Member States
- Two “Virtual Study Tours to Brussels” created unique opportunities for the CEE civil society actors to meet and discuss with the key EU stakeholders the EU policies developments in the national contexts. In December 2020 we addressed various topics ranging from climate policies and ETS, through EU Budget and Just Transition to efficiency in buildings. In 2021 we offered a deep-dive into the “100% renewable energy for Europe” vision.



# Meetings with representatives of\*:

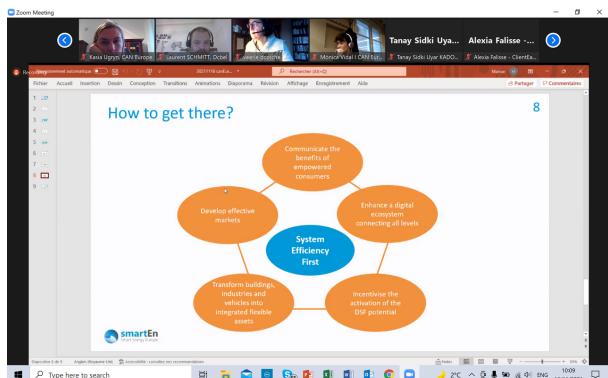


\*and/or involvement as speakers at events

# Results and recommendations



## What have we achieved?



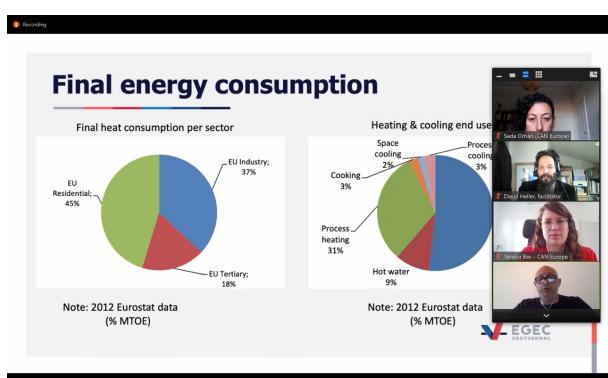
Source: Presentation by Marion Malafosse, smartEn

» We applied the “nLTS qualitative tool” to the national long-term climate planning documents of Czechia, Hungary, and Poland (where we analysed the Poland's Energy Policy by 2040) as well as other European countries, and communicated our assessment to both national policy makers as well as European Commission in a timely manner (in September 2021, whereas the European Commission published its assessment and communicated it to the Member States in October 2021)

» We gathered various stakeholders to discuss the most crucial climate and energy policies developments and moments (via national meetings and regional workshops) to develop joint perspectives and recommendations

» We established and enhanced regular dialogue between national civil society actors and the EU stakeholders

» We counterbalanced the climate action and energy transition narrative focused on costs and challenges with an approach of highlighting positive dimensions in these processes: we presented visions, best practices and solutions, learned from each other, discussed opportunities



Source: Presentation by Sanjeev Kumar, European Geothermal Energy Council

# Results and recommendations



## What have we learned and would like to share?



### Assessment of national long-term strategies

- Both Member States as well as the European Commission should improve their approach to this tool to make it work for a complex long-term climate planning that would serve as a guide for energy transition towards climate neutrality in particular countries and for the EU overall;
- Including a climate neutrality date which is no later than the EU climate neutrality date under the EU Climate Law, providing analyses and trajectories of the economic transformation in a comprehensive way to address interlinkages among particular sectors and policies, make use of potential synergies ensure policy coherence is crucial for properly designing a longer term economic, environmental and societal transition vision;
- Despite the fact that there is room for improvement in all CEE national LTS, there are also various elements in these documents and lessons learnt from the national processes that can be used for other Member States when drafting or revising their strategies

in order to improve their ambition and quality.



### National multi-stakeholder “Support Groups”

- Bringing various stakeholders together regularly, in an informal way, to discuss the EU political developments around climate and energy related files and moments, increases mutual understanding, enhances knowledges and offers new spaces for cooperation.

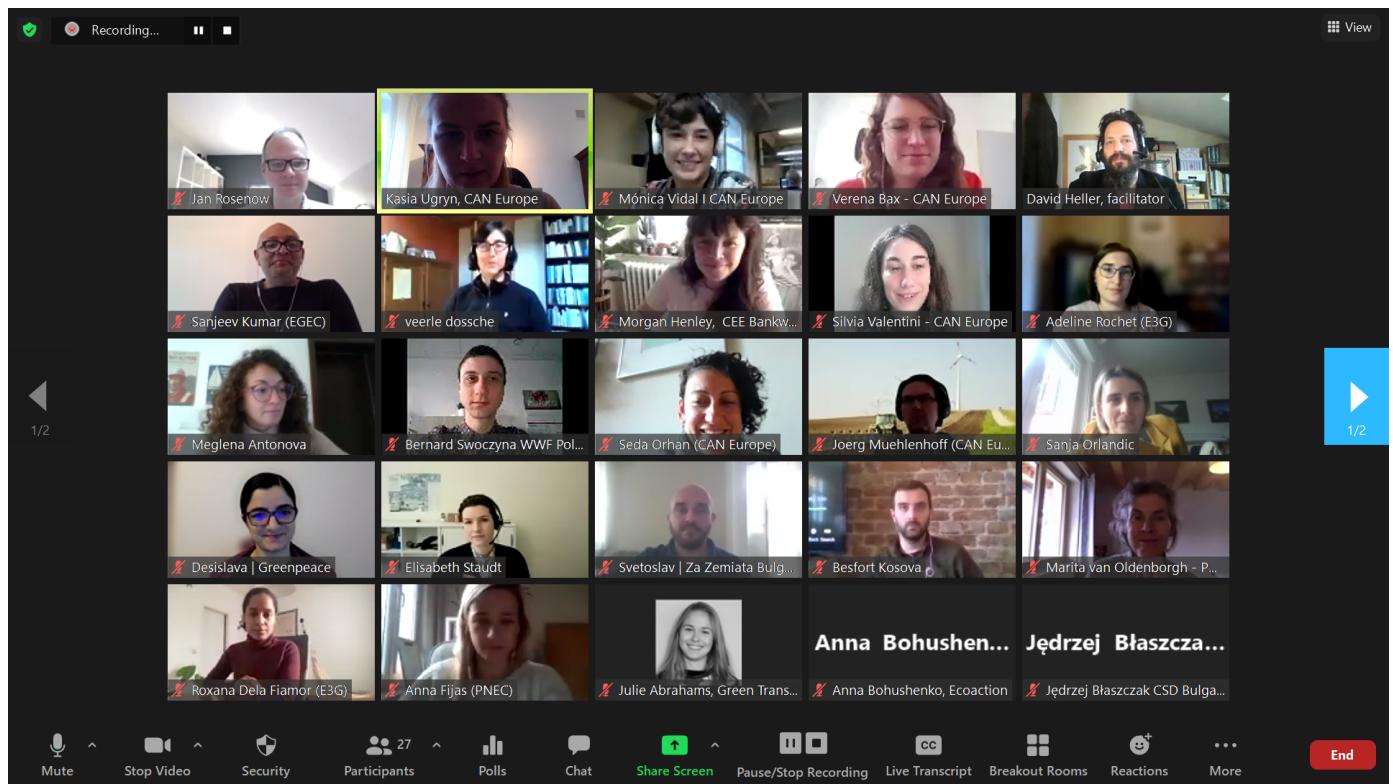


### Regional workshops and webinars

- There are a lot of similar energy and climate policies related developments in CEE, and many lessons learned to be shared; especially an overarching exchange on the EU strategies and policies as well as their governance is very much needed and useful for various stakeholders in the region;
- Offering discussion spaces for different actors establishes new connections and allows to address linkages and synergies between particular economic sectors that are not anymore taken as “silos”, but understood as a part of complex transition process.

## “Virtual Study Tours”

- For the Central Eastern European countries to develop ambitious climate and energy policies it is crucial to increase an exchange on the EU developments between the CEE civil society representatives and key European stakeholders;
- Such an exchange is highly beneficial for both sides if organised in a form of closed meetings, with various perspectives being presented and shared, in an atmosphere that invites to fully actively participate - both for capacity building, as well as advocacy purposes.



Recording... View

Jan Rosenow Kasia Uglyn, CAN Europe Mónica Vidal I CAN Europe Verena Bax - CAN Europe David Heller, facilitator

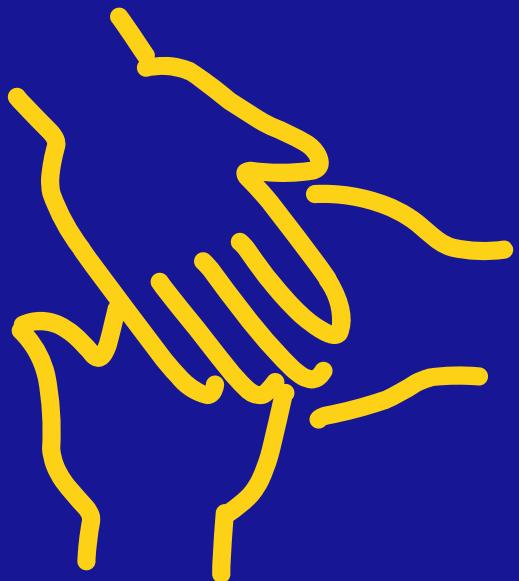
Sanjeev Kumar (EGEC) veerle dossche Morgan Henley, CEE Banky... Silvia Valentini - CAN Europe Adeline Rochet (EG)

Meglena Antonova Bernard Swoczyński WWF Pol... Seda Orhan (CAN Europe) Joerg Muehlenhoff (CAN Eu...) Sanja Orlandic

Desislava | Greenpeace Elisabeth Staudt Svetoslav | Za Zemiata Bulg... Besfort Kosova Marita van Oldenborgh - P...

Roxana Dela Fiamor (EGC) Anna Fijas (PNEC) Julie Abrahams, Green Trans... Anna Bohushenko, Ecoaction Jędrzej Błaszcza... Jędrzej Błaszcak CSD Bulg...

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