

5th Social Forum Energy Community South East Europe: European social partners demand a social dimension to regional energy strategy

(17 September 2012) It was 5 years ago when the [Memorandum of Understanding on the Social Aspects of the Energy Community of South East Europe](#) was signed following pressure and actions of the trade unions in Vienna October 2007.

The Minister of Labour and Social Welfare of Montenegro, Suad Numanovic, opened the 5th Social Forum. The Forum considered the progress that has been made. The overviews of the Energy Community Secretariat and the European Commission concluded that several countries have not advanced. Also issues like restructuring have not been addressed in much detail. *"The Forum also highlighted the need to address employment and skill challenges, resulting from restructuring of the energy sector. To efficiently manage such change, involvement of Social Partners at all levels will be necessary in line with just transition and decent work principles."*

The Forum also considered the Regional Energy Strategy. Forum participants, including the European social partners, criticized the lack of a social chapter and the importance of an open and transparent consultation process. *"Upon the discussions, the Secretariat invited the Participants to work together towards outlining a Social Strategy by mid 2013, to be further developed along the envisaged activities in the Energy Community context, promoting the market and infrastructure developments. The Forum welcomed this initiative and asked the Secretariat to present it for endorsement to PHLG and MC along the relevant Energy Community rules."* The European social partners including EPSU indicated their willingness to participate in developing the strategy.

Trade union colleagues from Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia took part in the Forum. The meeting took place in Becici, Montenegro 11-12 September 2012. The [conclusions and documents are available](#). Apart from the presentations of EPSU on behalf of the social partners (Eurelectric and IndustriAll) other presentations available are the European Commission evaluation of the social action plans, the presentations on the energy strategy, on the reform of the Serbian gas company

NIS, and an interesting presentation of Austrian company EVN on energy poverty. The EPSU Deputy General Secretary participated.

- [Log in](#) to post comments
- [Printer-friendly version](#)

Policies

[Energy](#)

Sectors

[Utilities](#)