

Public participation			Level of ambition			
Early publication	Independent review	Public consultation	Energy efficiency	Renewable energy sources	Fossil fuels phase-out	Investment needs
A	B	B	B-	B-	C+	C+
Draft available to the public in September 2018, with reasonable time for comments	Discussions among inter-institutional expert groups and parliamentarians with the participation of social partners	Several public hearings and presentations of NECPs to regional and local stakeholders, SEA process will be done but not in parallel with the NECP development	Massive compulsory savings until 2030, lower energy intensity	45% in final (40% for 2020)	No definite goals to phase out natural gas, only decrease its use in the mix	Mainly EU funds-based, thus not concrete yet, as national level planning has not really begun

The first draft NECP was made available to the public in September 2018, offering a reasonable amount of time for comments. According to the Ministry of Economy, the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) procedure should begin in the next few months. The SEA will review the draft NECP that was submitted to the Commission in December 2018 and amended version from early 2019.

Several public hearings and presentations of these NECPs to regional and local stakeholders have been held, along with discussions among institutions, expert groups and parliamentarians, together with social partners. Yet the Ministry of Economy has not made any real commitment to publish or respond to comments received during consultations.

The drafting of the NECP has happened alongside a government-led process of cancelling an infeasible feed-in tariff. The outcomes of the discussions between the Ministry of Economy and interest groups are not yet known, but this decision will have a major impact on RES support schemes. Despite progress towards a new low-carbon development policy, Latvia's NECP does not yet provide stable ground for discussing the public benefits of a carbon-neutral society and climate objectives for the common good.

Level of ambition

Latvia aims for a 45 per cent target of renewable energy in final energy consumption by 2030, but it actually lags behind other EU countries, as the current RES growth dynamics for 2020 is

already set at 40 per cent. It is therefore crucial to immediately implement the maximum possible measures to support the growth of RES so that Latvia can achieve the EU's greenhouse gases reduction target for 2050. Even though the proportion of renewable energy in Latvia is relatively high in comparison to other EU countries, this is largely an achievement of the hydropower plants built during Soviet times and not the result of a recent and systematic policy.

In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, Latvia is clearly not on a path to reach its 2030 targets, and the measures for emissions reductions are insufficient, and some of them deserve revision. First, incineration of residential waste should not be categorised in the NECP as a renewable energy. Second, many assumptions underpinning emissions reduction targets rely on the potential for clean and renewable gases without knowing the real costs and benefits of the adjustments needed for existing and planned natural gas infrastructure to deploy biogas or hydrogen for RES electricity. And third, there is no definite goal to phase out natural gas, only a gradual decrease in the final consumption, putting the investment plans in question.

At the same time, current energy efficiency targets are insufficient to reach the compulsory savings for 2030 without a more progressive policy. The assessment of investment needs in Annex 5 of the NECP is provisional and mainly based on the use of EU funds, as national level planning of fund allocation is still to come.