

The Energy Community Secretariat and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have issued joint Policy Guidelines to help countries in the region design and implement an Energy Efficiency Obligation scheme in line with Article 7 of the EU Energy Efficiency Directive.

According to the Secretariat's press release, Article 7 requires EU Member States to achieve cumulative energy savings between 2014 and 2020, equivalent to new yearly savings of 1.5% of a reference quantity of energy sales. This requirement has been transposed into the EnC acquis with the revised basis for the target of cumulative savings with the new yearly savings equivalent to 0.7% of the reference quantity over the period from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2020.

Contracting Parties must achieve the target either through an EEO scheme, 'Alternative Measures', or a combination of the two. EEO schemes are a legislative mechanism that places requirements on 'Obligated Parties' - in most cases electricity or gas suppliers - to meet quantitative energy savings targets across their customer portfolio.

The Policy Guidelines lays out the following recommendations for getting started with an EEO scheme:

Be realistic on scope and timetable

Consider related alternatives (perhaps for a transitional period)

Early engagement of the Ministry of Finance and energy regulator are essential

Early engagement of Obligated Parties is also essential

Pay attention to development of supporting documentation

Regular reviews are necessary.

Detailed overview of EEO schemes in the region

The Policy Guidelines are already being reflected in the policy work of the EBRD and the EnC Secretariat - most notably in Serbia, Montenegro and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where the Regional Energy Efficiency Programme is providing assistance to authorities to select the most appropriate measures for implementing the requirements of Article 7, the Secretariat said.

The Policy Guidelines brings detailed overview of EEO schemes in EBRD countries of operation and EnC Contracting Parties, including FYROM, Serbia, BiH, Kosovo*, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and Greece.

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