The EU4Energy Initiative covers all support of the European Union to improve the security, supply and sustainability of energy in the Eastern Partner countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. It does this by financing projects and programmes that help reform energy markets, reduce national energy dependence and lower consumption. Over the longer term, this makes energy supply more affordable, reliable and transparent, thus curtailling energy poverty and reducing energy bills for both businesses and citizens alike.

Within the EU4Energy Governance project, the Energy Charter Secretariat cooperates with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus to strengthen the countries’ legal and regulatory frameworks in the areas of energy efficiency, energy market reforms and the enhancement of the investment climate. Best practices of energy policies, which have proven to function well in the European Union and other Eastern Partnership countries, serve as models that could be transposed into the specific contexts of partner countries.

Belarus by the Numbers

- Number of participants in EU4Energy events: 200+
- Number of capacity-building workshops and events: 11
- Number of tailor-made technical reports and legislative proposals: 14

The Multiple Benefits of EU4Energy Cooperation

- Building investor confidence in attracting investments in Belarus’ energy sector
- Greater energy efficiency in the country and less dependence on energy imports
- Embedding a practice of stakeholder consultations in the law- and policy-making process

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Scaling up Investments in Energy Efficiency

Belarus’ long-term goals are the reduction of the energy intensity of its GDP and the development of indigenous energy sources including renewable energy. In this respect, EU4Energy has been working with Belarusian stakeholders to strengthen the country’s legal and regulatory framework in order to attract more investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy, specifically in the electricity and industrial sectors. A task-force worked to identify the actual barriers and priority drivers affecting investments in energy efficiency. This resulted in a long-term roadmap outlining specific measures and proposals including, inter alia, the development of legal basis for energy efficiency services, the introduction of energy management standards in industrial enterprises and intensification of reforms in the electricity and natural gas sectors. This roadmap of recommendations serves as a basis for further EU4Energy cooperation with Belarus in promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Energy Efficiency Services

A market for energy service companies (ESCO) is a cost-effective way to exploit the energy savings potential from high-energy-consuming sectors. However, for such a scheme to be successful in Belarus, certain budgetary and financial adjustments should be made. Here EU4Energy is working with the Government of Belarus to build the necessary institutional capacity to foster an energy services market and promote the use of energy performance contracts (EPC). A large-scale, public “Super ESCO” would assume a central coordinating role in financing, procuring contracts (EPC) and tenders services (initiation, evaluation, budgeting, contracting) and tenders services to subcontractors. It then monitors and verifies the achieved energy savings of projects.

Electricity Market Reform

The Belarusian electricity sector is characterised by a vertically integrated state-owned association as the major owner and operator of national electricity infrastructure. As per the task-force recommendations, the Ministry of Energy and EU4Energy co-organised a series of capacity-building sessions that examine different models of liberalised electricity markets with clearly defined rules for the wholesale and retail markets, grid connection and dispatching. These workshops provide practical input into the ongoing process of preparing legal documents for the future rules of the electricity market in Belarus. Ultimately, establishing competitive electricity markets would improve the sector’s efficiency and optimise the use of energy resources in Belarus.

Energy Investment Risk Assessment

A predictable policy, legal and regulatory landscape could attract more investment and contribute to Belarus’ goals of increased energy efficiency and renewables. In this regard, the EIRA team conducted a thorough assessment of the country’s regulatory framework. Tailor-made recommendations focus on:

1. instituting formal mechanisms for inter-ministerial coordination and stakeholder engagement in the policy-making process;
2. enabling free and complete access to both enacted and draft legislation; and
3. setting up an ombudsman for investigating and resolving investors’ complaints vis-à-vis governmental entities.

The EU4Energy supports Belarus in adopting some of these measures to help the Government foster greater confidence in the country’s investment climate.

Sub-Indicators Assessing Investment Risks