



# **Climate Policy and Civil Society:** The Future of the Eastern Partnership Countries in the Context of the European Green Deal

Policy Paper



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# Table of Contents

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Summary	4
Abbreviations	7
Introduction	8
Methodology	10
<b>Chapter I. Climate policy in the Eastern Partnership countries and the EU</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1. Contribution of the EU and the EaP countries into the global problem of climate change.....	12
1.2. Current trends in the climate policies in the EU and in the EaP countries .....	18
<b>Chapter II. Non-governmental organizations in the Eastern Partnership countries and their impact on climate policy</b>	<b>31</b>
2.1. NGOs working on climate change in the EaP countries .....	32
2.2. Engagement of NGOs in key processes related to climate policy.....	40
2.3. Organizational development of climate-oriented NGOs and challenges in their activities.....	43
<b>Chapter III. Vision for the future development of climate policy in the Eastern Partnership countries, the NGOs role and place in this process</b>	<b>46</b>
3.1. The EGD impact on promotion of climate issues within the EaP .....	47
3.2. The EGD impact on the promotion of climate issues on a national level .....	48
3.3. The EGD impact on the operation of NGOs in the Eastern Partnership countries .....	50
3.4. Prerequisites for efficient climate policy of the EaP countries under the EGD .....	51
<b>Annex I. Sources used to map CSOs in area of climate policy</b>	<b>52</b>

## Summary

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The climate change issues are a cross-cutting element in the European Green Deal, a programme of actions of the European Union adopted in December, 2019. The EGD is centered on an ambitious plan to shift to a climate neutral Europe by 2050.

The EU aspires for global leadership and the ambitions to achieve climate neutral Europe which implies the use of so called “Green Deal Diplomacy” and expansion of the greening policy beyond the EU member-states, to reach out to the EU closest neighbours, also through the Eastern Partnership policy. It has already become obvious that the EGD will have a significant impact on the climate policy of Eastern Partnership countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

At the same time, the success of the EGD and climate policy of the EU (as well as of the EaP countries) will directly depend on engaging the entire population and stakeholders to all stages of climate policy. In this regard, civil society organizations are going to have a special role, especially where the social awareness and support of climate reform are yet too low.

**An objective** of the research is to assess the role of civil society in the climate action in Eastern Partnership countries, to identify a possible EGD impact on climate policy within Eastern Partnership and in the Eastern Partnership countries, and to offer a vision on the possible shift of focus in activities of the NGOs in the region, with account for the new reality. Therefore, we posed five research questions, and this paper hopefully offers the answers. Find below a brief summary of our answers to these questions.

### **(1) What are the key features (objectives, practices, etc.) of the NGO activities on climate change issues in the EaP countries (who, where, what, when)?**

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According to our estimates, there are about 85 NGOs in the EaP countries directly engaged in climate change issues. We can see an unequal distribution of such organizations by country and by intensity of operations in the key subject areas, where Ukraine outweighs all countries in the EaP region.

The pool of organizations does not include any NGO focusing exclusively on climate change. At the same time, the region has networks (associations) with main objective to promote climate action. In the recent years, there has been an evident trend to separating climate change as a separate work component of environmental NGO. The organizations work in such subject areas of climate policy as climate change (including reduction of emissions), adaptation to adverse impact of climate change, renewable energy, awareness building and raising, sustainable mobility, energy efficiency, forest protection, etc.

The analysis of NGO activities in climate change suggests the following main forms of operations: advocacy, research and expertizing, awareness activities, and building leadership. The latter is a peculiarity typical to organizations working on climate change.

Overall, CSOs show various activity levels and engagement with the processes related to climate change (national plans on energy and climate, promotion of renewable energy, low emission strategies, energy strategies, documents for local climate policy).

NGOs in the EaP countries demonstrate high networking capacity and are prone to join their efforts in climate change. However, their activities

are still dependent on foreign financing. Activities of such organizations are often implemented within a limited political space; they face various challenges due to peculiarities of national climate policy making.

### **(2) How can EGD impact the promotion of climate issues within the EaP?**

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Climate change has already been incorporated into the future priorities of the Eastern Partnership beyond 2020. Environmental and climate resilience is one of the five suggested new priorities of the Eastern Partnership. It will have a definitive impact on the future practical cooperation mechanisms under the EaP towards the integration of climate considerations.

The EGD impact mechanism may be shown in the following way. The European Green Deal provides for global leadership of the EU as an objective, and the “green diplomacy” as a tool to achieve it, will impact the EU foreign policy. Eastern Partnership is one of the areas of the EU foreign policy. Therefore, it will be determining the EGD impact on further priorities of the Eastern Partnership.

### **(3) How can EGD impact the promotion of climate issues on the national level of the EaP countries?**

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The climate policy of EaP countries in the following years will face systemic impact from the EU towards more ambitious goals.

The potential impact on the EaP countries may come with the application of diplomatic, trade, and financial instruments by the EU that would include the supportive and encouraging measures, as well as the measures of additional financial impact. The EU International technical assistance will be an important tool of the EGD practical impact on the national climate policy in the EaP countries.

### **(4) What changes in the NGO activities will strengthen their role in promoting climate targets in the following years?**

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Overall, the higher priority of climate issues due to the EGD implementation will create new favorable conditions and opportunities for NGOs, climate-related in particular. To benefit from the new opportunities, NGOs should enhance their capacity, also cooperate with each other, engage social support and local financing, strengthen the research component of their activities, and strategic planning.

Success will come to those NGOs that manage to engage wide audiences of average citizens, also through mass membership. Association of the environmental organizations into the intersectoral movement to achieve the EGD targets will make the NGOs stronger.

The enhanced priority of climate issues will also impact the key challenges faced by the climate-related NGOs in their work. The impact may be both positive and negative.

### **(5) How could CSOs promote the EGD climate targets in the region?**

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The EGD will contribute to the increased ambitiousness of climate policy and priorities of climate change issues. However, it will not be able to provide for the efficiency of the national effort alone in climate action and adaptation to the climate change in the EaP countries.

In our view, non-governmental organizations may be more efficient in promoting the EGD climate targets and climate issues in general if at the same time they make the efforts to ensure that the national climate policymaking and implementation meets the cross-cutting prerequisites to be effective.

We have identified the following four efficiency prerequisites for the effective the national climate policies:

- ✓ policies shall be developed and implemented as a process, rather than as a set of documents;
- ✓ engaging the local level, and the increased role of cities is a necessary precondition for an efficient climate policy;
- ✓ the success of climate policy will directly depend on the engagement of the entire population and stakeholders into all stages of the climate policy cycle; in particular, there is a critical need in the region to enhance social support for climate action;

- ✓ implementation of technical assistance projects, which are an important driver in climate policy-making in the EaP countries, must ensure local ownership.

We hope that in addition to offering our answers to the questions raised, the research also encourages the pursuit of other to explore into the EGD impact on climate processes in the EaP area.

The analytical paper has been drawn as part of implementing a research project on the "Role of Civil Society in Eastern Partnership Countries in Promoting Climate Targets in the Context of the European Green Deal" funded by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Ukraine.

# Abbreviations

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**CSO** – civil society organization

**EaP** – Eastern Partnership

**EGD** – European Green Deal

**EU** – European Union

**GDP** – Gross Domestic Product

**GHG** – greenhouse gases

**GIZ** – German Society for international cooperation

**NAP** – National adaptation plan

**NDC** – Nationally Determined Contribution

**NGO** – Non-Governmental Organizations

**PA** – The Paris Agreement

**SEAP/SEAP-C** – sustainable energy and climate action plans

**UNDP** – UN Development Programme

**UNFCCC** – UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

**USAID** – US Agency for International Development

# Introduction

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Climate policy issues are becoming increasingly more relevant in the present world. They are actively promoted on a global scale through various tools of international cooperation of countries; governments include them into the national agenda and consider not only in the context of environment protection but also in terms of security; climate is gaining momentum on the level of individual cities, especially in terms of adaptation to climate change. The role of civil society in the above-mentioned processes is unquestionable. They engage as regards their expertise, develop and advocate for the relevant climate policies and laws and also organize and participate in local climate campaigns and marches on climate justice and transition to renewable energy.

Climate change issues are a cross-cutting element of the programme of action of the European Union, the European Green Deal. The EGD includes an ambitious plan to shift to the climate-neutral Europe by 2050. In December, 2019, the Communication from the Commission was adopted on the “European Green Deal”. It identifies key green transformation areas for the European Union and its role as a global leader in climate and environmental processes in the world. The Communication includes, among other things, a Roadmap with a list of documents to be adopted or amended, as well as the timelines for all measures.

EGD is a new growth strategy targeting the transformation of the EU into a just and wealthy society with modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy where the net GHG emissions in 2050 stand at zero. Climate change challenges and their resolution are in the core of the EGD, and cover the large-scale greenhouse gas emissions reduction, as well as investments into research and innovation. The EGD also foresees the interim objective, such as the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from 40% to 50-55% in 2030 (compared to 1990 levels).

Policies and measures under the EGD will be implemented in virtually all key areas of economic and social life: climate, energy, industrial strategy for circular economy, sustainable and smart mobility, green agricultural policy, biodiversity conservation, zero pollution, financial instruments, EU as a global leader.

The EU's urge for global leadership and the ambitions to achieve climate neutrality for the entire Europe imply the application of the so-called “green diplomacy” and the expansion of greening policy to cover both EU member-states and the closest neighbours of the European Union, also through the Eastern Partnership policy.

Current priorities of Eastern Partnership were set back in 2008, and have been repeatedly updated at the biennial Eastern Partnership Summits. Since the onset, Eastern Partnership policy has included two key tracks: multilateral (regional) and bilateral.

The 2008 Communication mentions the climate change within the “multilateral track” of Eastern Partnership, as part of the priority “Economic Integration and Approximation to EU Policies.” The priorities of the multilateral cooperation on climate change included the following aspects: international agreements, strategic planning, environmental governance, law enforcement, certain environmental issues, financing of green investment in the regional context, climate action, adaptation to climate change, engaging partners to international discussions on future climate action, and exchange of experience in emission trading. The bilateral priorities did not include environment or climate change.

Emergence of climate change issues has been induced by launching the work on the future Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals; that is why climate change continued to be



on the agenda at the Summits in 2013, 2015, and 2017 (in the Joint Declaration of the 2017 Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels, adverse impact of climate change has been recognized among “the greatest challenges of our time”).

The so-called 20 Deliverables for 2020 adopted at the 2017 Summit include two specific deliverables related to climate change: enhanced energy-efficiency and the use of renewable energy and support to adaptation to climate change. Both tasks are part of the “Stronger Connectivity” cluster that includes transport, energy, environment, and climate change.

On March 18, 2020, the Commission published the Communication on the future EaP priorities (beyond 2020 ). Environment and climate resilience are among the five suggested new priorities of the EaP. Inclusion of the separate priority resulted from the growing significance of the issues in the world, and from the new political goals of the EU set in the EGD (where climate change is a central element).

The priority includes five tasks: (1) scale up action in the areas that are critical for people’s health and wellbeing; (2) increase the resource-efficiency of national economies; (3) develop new green jobs and economic opportunities linked to the green transition; (4) develop local and renewable sources of energy; (5) manage natural assets to maximise sustainability. Moreover, climate change has been included into other future priorities of Eastern Partnership: economic cooperation and trade; sustainable finance and investments; research and innovation.

The details for the implementation of the EGD deliverables in the EaP format are expected at the EaP Summit scheduled for March, 2021, when new long-term EaP objectives shall be adopted. In any respect, it has become evident that the EGD will impact the climate policy of the EU Eastern partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The impact will bring the change in the forms of work and in prioritizing by civil society organizations in the EaP region.

The objective of the policy paper is to assess the role of civil society in the climate action of the EaP countries, to identify a possible impact of EGD on the climate policy of Eastern Partnership and EaP countries, and provide a vision on the possible shift in focus of the region’s NGOs, with account for the new reality.

We hereby acknowledge the following experts for the overviews of climate policies of Eastern Partnership countries and the role of civil society: Amalia Hambartsumyan (“Khazer”, Armenia), Fikrad Jaffarov (“Sustainable Development”, Azerbaijan), Maria Falaleeva (“Ekapraekt”, Belarus), Nugzar Kokhreidze (“Dialogue of generations”, Georgia), Evgheni Camenscic (“GENESCOTEC, Moldova).

The policy paper has been prepared as part of the research project “Role of Civil Society in Eastern Partnership Countries in Promoting Climate Targets in the Context of the European Green Deal” funded by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Ukraine.

## Methodology

The policy paper has been drawn on the basis of the expert research.

The subject matter of the study is climate policy of the EaP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and the EU, EGD, activities of NGOs in the EaP countries in the area of climate change and adaptation to climate change.

To conduct the research, the following methods were used:

- ✓ desk study (collection and study of the available reports, policy papers, strategic documents, and materials of projects operating in the countries and on the regional scale, etc.);
- ✓ the method of analysis (the collected information was analyzed, structured, and presented in the paper correspondingly);
- ✓ the mapping method, to identify peculiarities in the CSO activities on climate change (collecting information on NGO activities, methods of their work, participation in different climate policy processes, and the respective systematization of the collected information);
- ✓ the method of forecasting (applied in Chapter III to model the vision for EGD impact on the promotion of climate targets in the region);
- ✓ comparative method (to compare the situations in different EaP countries).

The study relied on the contributions from national experts on climate policy from the EaP countries. With this objective in mind, a questionnaire was designed with questions on NGOs and coalitions operating in the relevant

countries on climate change, and also on climate policy in the countries. CSOs mapping was carried out on the basis of open sources listed in Annex I to this paper.

In the process of research (being the basis for this policy paper), we attempted the answer the following questions:

- (1) What are the key features (objectives, practices, etc.) of the NGO activities on climate change issues in the EaP countries (who, where, what, when)?
- (2) How can EGD impact the promotion of climate aspects within the EaP?
- (3) How can EGD impact the promotion of climate issues on the national level of the EaP countries?
- (4) What changes in the NGO activities will strengthen their role in promoting climate targets in the following years?
- (5) How could CSOs promote the EGD climate targets in the region?



Chapter I.  
**Climate policy in the  
Eastern Partnership  
countries and the EU**

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# 1.1. Contribution of the EU and the EaP countries into the global problem of climate change

EaP countries are a large source of GHG emissions in Europe. The share of GHG emissions in the cumulative emissions of the EU and EaP states amounts to 11%. It implies that climate policy of the EaP countries is important in terms of achieving the EGD objective, i.e. to have a climate neutral Europe by 2050. At the same time, the share of the three EaP countries (Azerbaijan, Belarus, and Ukraine) is large (especially, of the latter, which emissions amount to 69% of the total EaP countries emissions). These countries have a high capacity to develop renewable energy, which share in the final energy consumption is the lowest among the EaP countries and the EU as a whole.

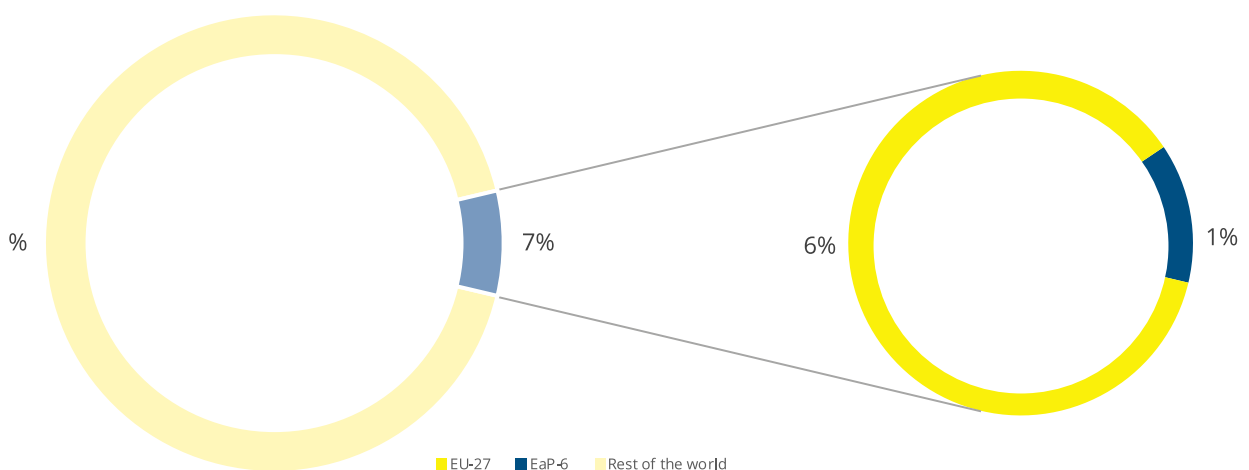
The climate policy of countries is closely related to the addressing the source for climate change – accumulation of GHG in the air. In this regard, it is important to understand what “contribution” comes from the EU and the EaP countries into the global GHG emissions (Diagram 1).

The cumulative net emissions of the EU member-states amount to as little as 6% of the global GHG emissions (the EaP countries – 1%). It suggests that the EU action to reduce their own emissions will not suffice to address the challenge on

a global scale. If the EU has the ambition for global leadership in climate action, the actual implementation implies the need to encourage other countries to reduce emissions.

To date, the cumulative emissions of the EaP countries amount to 13% of all the EU emissions (22% in 1990). Net GHG emissions of the EU MS and the EaP countries have dropped significantly, compared to 1990 levels (see Diagrams 2 and 3). The annual net emissions of the EU dropped by 1.5 million kt/year of CO<sub>2</sub>e and stand at 3,951,394 kt/year. The cumulative emissions of the EaP

**Diagram 1.** *Diagram 1. EU-27 and EaP-6 share in world net GHG emissions (2017)*



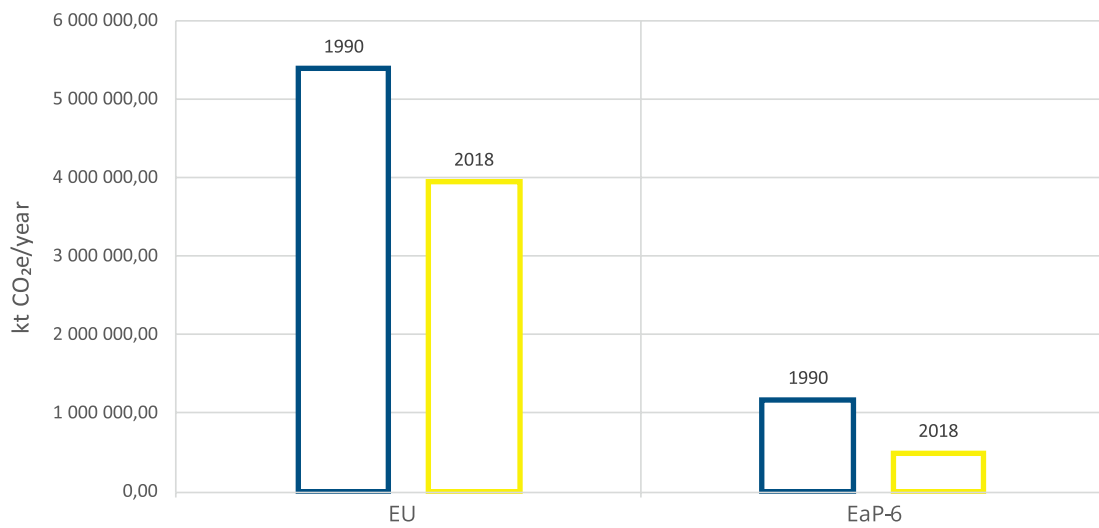
Data: World Resources Institute (2020)

countries dropped by 675,000 kt of CO<sub>2</sub>e and stand at 494 936 kt/year.

If we analyze the EU and the six EaP countries as one geographic source of GHG emissions we can see that a share of the six countries (11% of the total GHG emissions of the EU MS and EaP countries) is rather high to become an important EU target in terms of ambitions towards a climate neutral Europe by 2050. At the same time,

reduction rate was different: while the EaP share in the cumulative emissions (EU + EaP) was 18% in 1990, as of 2018 it was as little as 11%. It is indicative of the fact that the GHG reduction in the EU takes a slower pace. In regional terms, shares of Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova are very low, thus, their share in GHG emissions of the region's countries is almost non-existent, whereas, the shares of Ukraine, Belarus, and Azerbaijan are the highest.

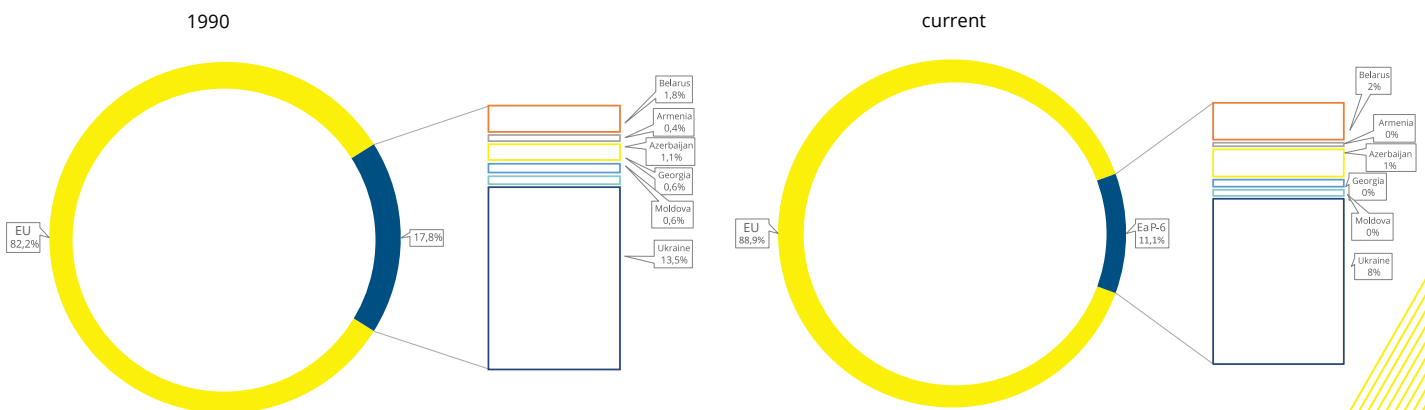
**Diagram 2.** Total GHG net emissions: EU and EaP (1990 v.2018)\*



\*Latest available year for non-Annex I countries

Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface (2020)

**Diagram 3.** Net GHG emissions: EU and EaP (1990)



Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface (2020)

The highest rate of GHG emissions in the EaP area accounts for Ukraine, where the annual net emissions stand at 341,889 kt of CO<sub>2</sub>e (or 69% of GHG emissions of all six EaP countries in total, Diagram 4).

The case of Ukraine and Belarus shows (see Diagrams 5 and 6) that GHG reduction in the EaP countries is found in the early 1990s. Apparently, it was caused by the systemic change in the economy and GDP structure in these countries (mostly, due to the production decrease and GDP drop); whereas, in the recent two decades, GHG emissions have flattened out (in Belarus, there is even some growth). It suggests that further GHG reduction cannot be secured in the context of *business as usual* and requires more focused changes in the key sectors.

**Carbon intensity of the GDP** is another important parameter in the context of climate change (Diagram 7). Certainly, the parameter largely depends on the GDP structure (such as on the production share therein) but it shows the carbon footprint of the national economy in general. As we can see, the carbon intensity of the GDP is the lowest in the EU (0.20 kg/\$GDP), while in Ukraine it is the highest (0.64 kg/\$GDP, three times higher than in the EU). Among the six EaP countries, the lowest carbon intensity of

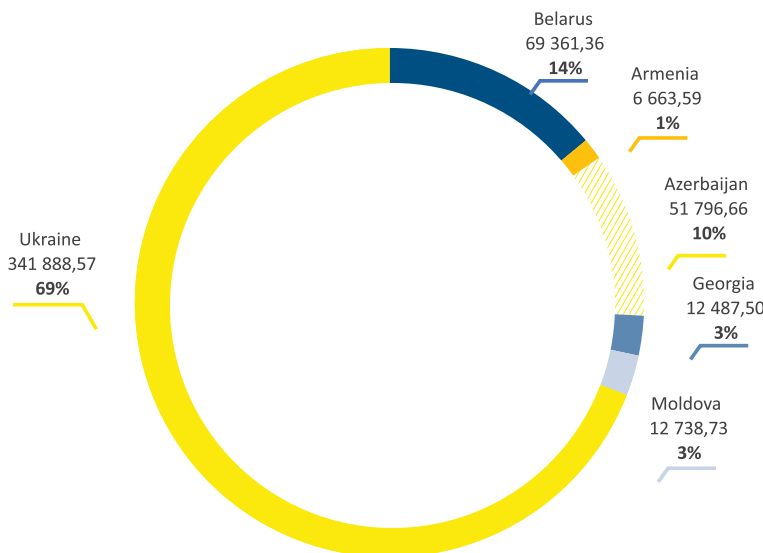
GDP is demonstrated by Armenia (0.25 kg/\$GDP) that is very close to the EU numbers, the same as Georgia (0.29 kg/\$GDP). Belarus, Azerbaijan, and Moldova fall into another group of countries, with the 0.38-0.45 kg/\$GDP. Therefore, the three countries and Ukraine have a large potential to reduce the carbon footprint of their economies. On the other hand, high carbon intensity GDP implies that the countries may be important for the EU in terms of applying a principle of the “shared but differentiated responsibility” (in fact, of its first part – the “shared” responsibility).

In all the countries, **energy** is a key source of greenhouse gas emissions (the lowest in Georgia); in Azerbaijan it is over 80% of total emissions (See Diagram 8).

**Industrial processes** are significant sources of emissions in Georgia and Ukraine; **agriculture** is accountable in all the six countries in the region (especially, in Belarus). Waste is a high source of GHG emissions in four countries: Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova.

The three countries with the highest GHG emissions (Azerbaijan, Belarus, and Ukraine) show a high share of **energy** in the total structure of GHG emissions (especially in Azerbaijan and Ukraine) but the other processes

**Diagram 4. Net GHG emissions: EaP countries ( kt CO<sub>2</sub>e/year)**



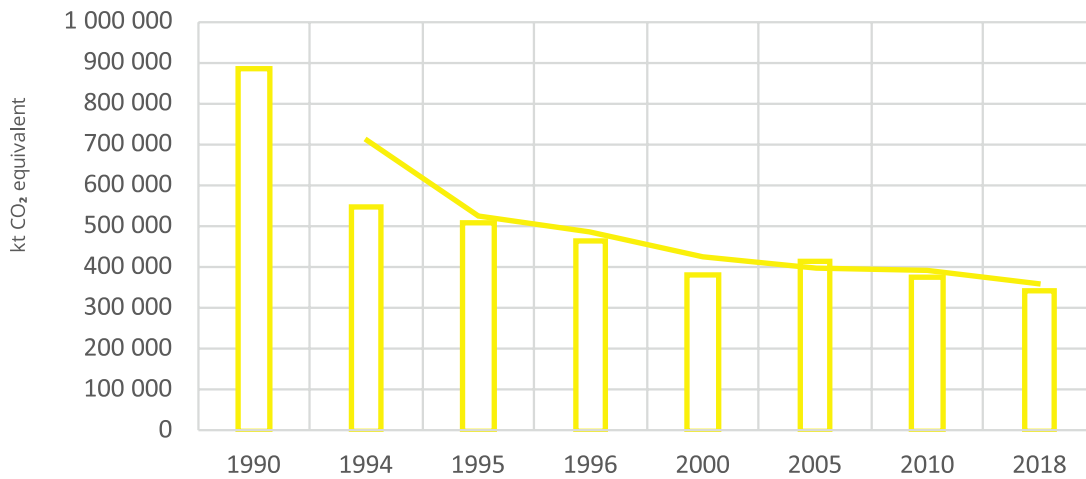
Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface (2020)

contribute differently, depending on a country. Belarus stands out in the group as it has the lowest of all energy share in the GHG emissions (62%), whereas, agriculture has a high potential in reducing the general GHG emissions in Belarus (almost 25% of all GHG emissions).

In terms of the role of energy in GHG emissions in the EaP countries, it is important to consider the high share of renewable energy in the final energy consumption (Diagram 9).

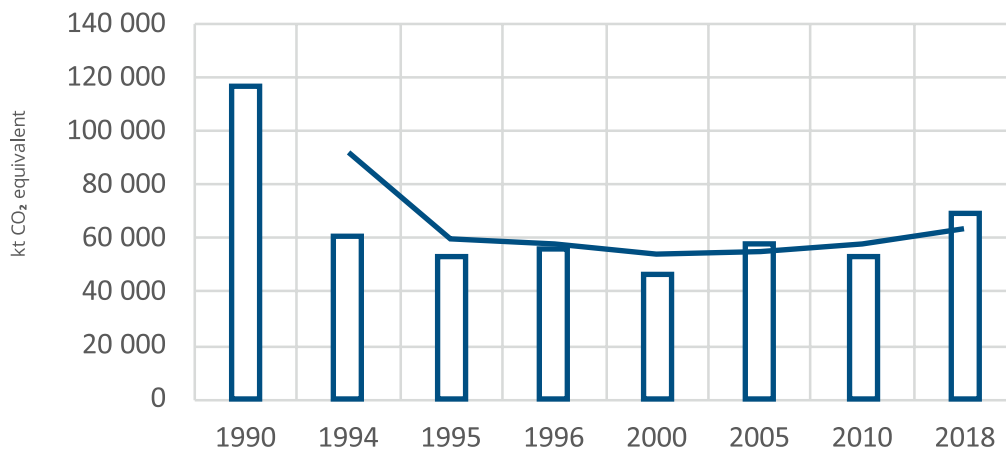
As we can see, the three countries with the highest GHG emissions in the EaP area (Belarus, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan) also have the lowest share of renewable energy in the final energy consumption, especially in Azerbaijan (1.9%). Therefore, the countries have a large potential to implement and invest into the reduction of GHG emissions. Azerbaijan's capacity is in the housing and transport sectors (accounting for 41.3% and 31.2% of total energy consumption, respectively), Belarus<sup>3</sup> - industrial, transport,

**Diagram 5.** Annual netto greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for Ukraine



Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface (2020)

**Diagram 6.** Annual netto greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for Belarus



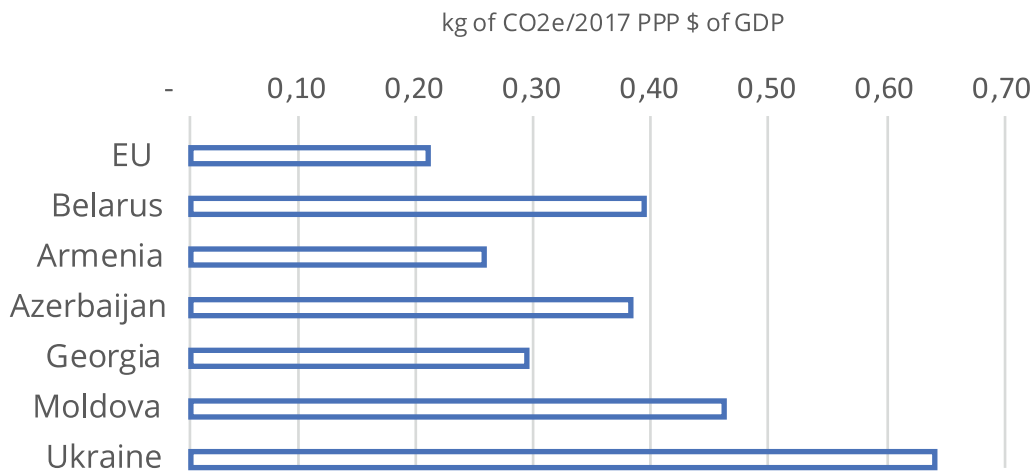
Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface (2020)

and housing sectors (22%, 21%, and 26%, respectively), Ukraine<sup>4</sup> – housing and industrial sectors (32% each). Specifically, the housing sector in the countries has a high potential for investment into energy efficiency and renewable energy.

For some EaP countries, the application of the principle of “shared but differentiated

responsibility” is important in terms of the second part (“differentiated”) that emphasizes the need to account for different economic development levels among the countries. Some countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Moldova) use the parameter of GHG emissions per capita as a significant argument in the context of their commitments under the Paris Agreement and/or the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

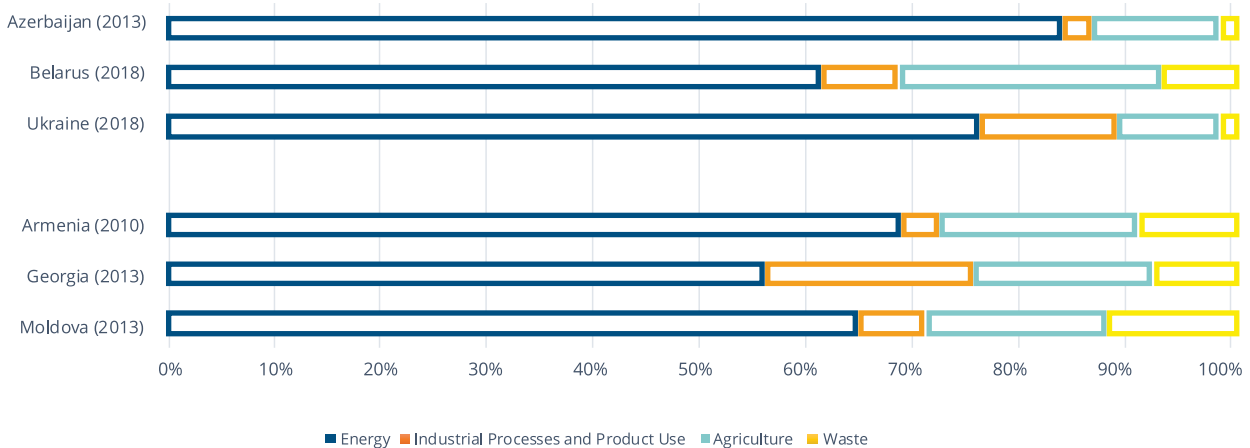
**Diagram 7. Carbon intensity of GDP, EU and EaP**



Data: EEU, BLR, UKR (2018); ARM (2010); AZE, MDA, GEO (2013)

Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface; World Development Indicators (2020)

**Diagram 8. GHG emissions by source, EaP countries**



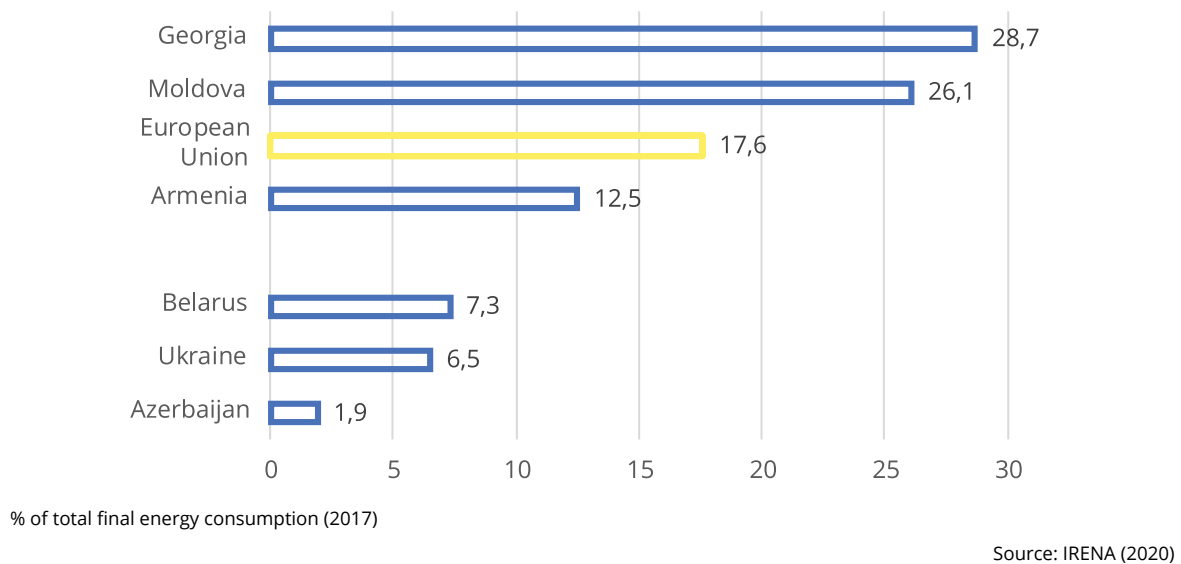
Source: UNFCCC GHG Data Interface (2020)



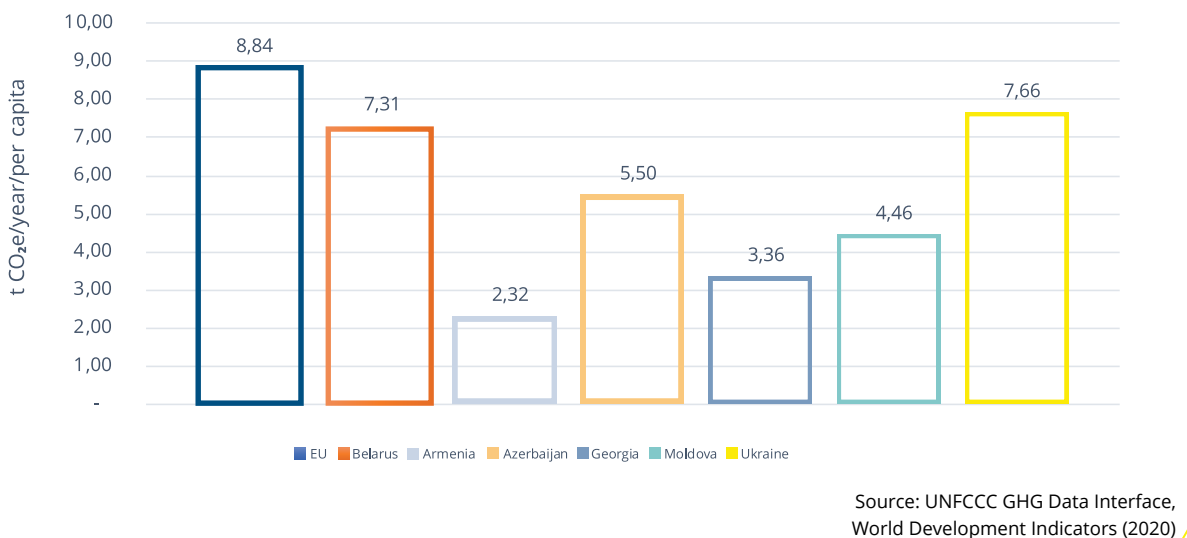
As we can see from the Diagram 10, the EU shows the highest GHG emissions per capita (8.8 ton/person/year), while Ukraine and Belarus only record slightly lower numbers (ab. 7 ton/person/year). At the same time, Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova show lower figures of GHG emissions per capita, compared with the EU (2.3, 3.3, and 4.5 ton/person/year, respectively). Even Azerbaijan, with the level of 5.5 ton/person/year, is much better than the EU. On the one hand, accounting

for this parameter can be justified for countries with no special commitments (such as the states included into Annex I of the Kyoto Protocol), particularly as to the need to receive the international assistance (technologies, financing, etc.). On the other hand, the approach may provide a significant political argument not to enhance their climate ambitions, and thus, resist the EU green diplomacy.

**Diagram 9.** Renewable energy consumption, EU and EaP



**Diagram 10.** GHG emissions per capita, EU and EaP



## 1.2. Current trends in the climate policies in the EU and in the EaP countries

### EGD and climate change: recent trends in the EU climate policy

Climate neutrality for Europe by 2050 is an ambitious goal of the EU climate policy. It can be achieved by introducing a set of measures for mitigation and adaptation to climate change foreseen in the strategies for low emission development and adaptation to climate change, in the national energy and climate plans, in mandatory inclusion of climate action into all sectoral policies of the EU, and in determining a specific contribution of each country into the achievement of the set climate targets.

The EU set a clear vision on how to achieve climate neutrality by 2050<sup>5</sup>, but the climate targets previously set by the EU\* on reduction of emissions were not conducive to full achievement of this target. Therefore, a key element of the EGD is to revise the EU climate policy in part of raising the EU climate ambitions for 2030 and 2050.

On September, 17, 2020, the Commission presented The 2030 Climate Target Plan, where they provided a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the EU at least by 55% by 2030, compared to the 1990 levels. The new target is based on the comprehensive Impact Assessment of social, economic, and environmental consequences of its implementation. The parameter is intended as a new NDC EU to Paris Agreement by the end of 2020.

On October, 8, 2020, the European Parliament supported the enactment of climate neutrality by 2050, but proposed to the Commission to set more ambitious goals to reduce GHG emissions by 2030. In particular, the targets of 60%, compared to 1990 levels, instead of 55%, and urged to introduce another interim target for 2040.<sup>6</sup>

To achieve the climate targets 2030 and 2050, the EGD set a number of measures needed to reform the climate policy and the EU acquis, such as the adoption of the following:

- ✓ the first European Climate Law to set the EU climate targets on the legislative level,\*\*
- ✓ amendments to the EU climate law. Submission of the Commission's proposals on the amendments is scheduled for June, 2021,

\* Climate and energy targets of the EU for 2020 were set in the package of legal acts, the 2020 Climate and Energy Package. The Package set three mandatory targets "20-20-20": to have the 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to 1990 levels; to raise the share of renewable energy consumption in the EU to 20%; to improve energy efficiency by 20%. The package of legal acts was endorsed by the Council of the EU on December, 12, 2008 (Presidency conclusion), by the European parliament – on December, 17 (Resolutions P6\_TA(2008) 0609 / 0610 / 0611 / 0612.

\*\* On March, 4, 2020, the Commission presented their proposals on the new Regulation setting the grounds for achieving climate neutrality and amending the Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law). On September, 17, 2020, amended the proposals and suggested the 55% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, compared 1990.

- ✓ long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies of the EU and the member-states. 2050 long-term low GHG emissions development strategy was published in March, 2020,
- ✓ a new EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change to be adopted in 2021.

The EGD foresees that the contribution to the achievement of climate targets shall be provided both by the EU, and by the member-states. An important role in determining the contribution belongs to the national energy and climate plans\*.

### National climate policy in the EaP countries: comparative overview

**The quantitative indicator of the EaP countries targets is different, whereas, the ambition of many EaP countries is lower compared to the EGD. The situation is also different in drawing strategic documents on mitigation and adaptation to climate change. In the recent years, there has been a growing trend in climate policy and policymaking; international financial and technical assistance plays an important role in the process.**

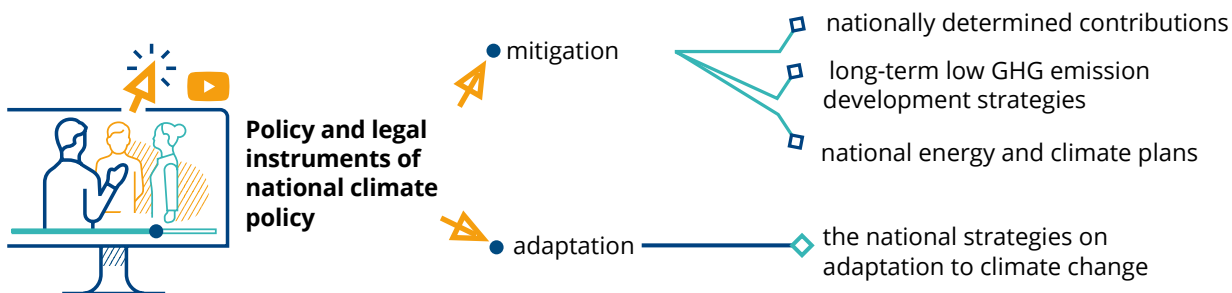
UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement are the key international instruments impacting and shaping the climate policy of certain countries. The status of EaP countries in these international agreements is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. International Climate Agreements**

	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change <sup>7</sup>						
date of signing	13.06.1992	12.06.1992	11.06.1992	–	12.06.1992	11.06.1992
ratification date (A – adoption, AA – approval, a – accession)	14.05.1993 (A)	16.05.1995	11.05.2000 (AA)	29.07.1994 (a)	09.06.1995	13.05.1997
Paris Agreement <sup>8</sup>						
date of signature	20.09.2016	22.04.2016	22.04.2016	22.04.2016	21.09.2016	22.04.2016
ratification date (A – adoption, AA – approval)	23.03.2017	09.01.2017	21.09.2016 (A)	08.05.2017 (AA)	20.06.2017	19.09.2016

National climate policies are implemented in the two key areas – mitigation and adaptation to climate change. Their major political and legal instruments are the nationally determined contributions, long-term low GHG emission development strategies and the national strategies on adaptation to climate change. The EaP countries that are parties to the Energy Community shall also adopt national energy and climate plans.

\* On October, 14, 2020, the Commission adopted The Communication (COM/2020/564 final), where it made an assessment of 27 national energy and climate plans, in terms of their reaching the first stage of transition to climate neutrality and further steps for 2021-2030. The assessment will be supplemented with individual assessments of member-states, as part of the progress report of the Energy Union.



NDC is a key element of Paris Agreement that directly contributes to achieving its objectives, and reflects the efforts of individual states in reducing GHG emissions on a national scale and in adaptation to climate change.

To date, the climate targets of the EaP countries for reduction of GHG emissions under the PA, have been determined in the first NDCs (see more in Table 2). In 2020, the signatory states shall update or submit new NDCs. Presently, Moldova was the only country to update its NDC and submit it to the UNFCCC in 2020. As to all other EaP countries, the work on the update or adoption of the new contribution is underway. The EaP countries are offered international assistance in developing their new NDCs,\* such as within the project EU4Climate\*\*.

**Table 2.** *The first nationally determined contributions of the EaP countries*

	Armenia <sup>9</sup>	Azerbaijan <sup>10</sup>	Belarus <sup>11</sup>	Georgia <sup>12</sup>	Moldova <sup>13</sup> (updated) <sup>14</sup>	Ukraine <sup>15</sup>
Level of GHG emissions	100% neutral to the GHG emissions ecosystem (conditional)	35% reduction of GHG emissions, compared to the base year	at least 28% reduction of GHG emissions, compared to the base level	Unconditional 15% reduction of GHG emissions, (conditional – 25%), compared to the base level	Unconditional target 64-67% (conditional – 78%)  updated NDC:  unconditional target – 70% (conditional – 88%) reduction of GHG emissions, compared to the base year	within 60% of GHG emissions of the base year
Reference year	1990	1990	1990	2013	1990	1990
Year of implementation	2050	2030	2030	2030	2030	2030

\* For example, the development of the updated (second) nationally determined contribution of Ukraine to the Paris Agreement (NDC2) is administered by the sectoral Ministry, with financial support of the Government of Sweden, and with technical assistance from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

\*\* Moldova developed its updated NDC with the EU financial assistance within the project EU4Climate. The EU4Climate Programme (2018-2022) offers support for the development and implementation of climate policies by the EaP countries, and also for the fulfillment of their commitments under the Paris Agreement. The programme is funded by the EU and implemented by the UNDP. Within the programme, a portal was launched on climate policy and the legal frameworks of EaP countries.



## Nationally determined contributions

Country's contribution to global reduction of GHG emissions. They reflect country's ambitions towards emissions reduction with account taken of national circumstances and capacity. NDCs contain information about the base year for determining GHG emissions reductions, implementation period, scope and coverage, methodological approaches to emissions and removals estimation and accounting, substantiation why NDC is fair and ambitious and how it contributes to Paris Agreement goals.

NDCs are different in the GHG emissions reduction scope in terms of the base year to compare the GHG emissions reduction (it is 1990, Georgia set 2013 as a reference year), and the implementation year (2030 was set by the countries as the year to achieve the reduction targets (except for Armenia, where the year has been set as 2050)). When we compare the quantitative values of the first NDCs of the countries for 2030, we can see that it was only Moldova that set more ambitious targets. Besides, Moldova's target (both in the first and the updated NDC) is higher compared to the EU NDC (in terms of the first EU NDC (at least 40% reduction of GHG emissions, compared to 1990), and as regards the targets set in the EGD).

NDCs of Georgia and Moldova establish two categories of targets – unconditional (assumed by the countries to be achieved in the target year) and conditional (to be achieved by the countries upon certain conditions, such as access to and allocation of cheap financial resources, technologies, and technical cooperation). Moreover, upon condition of technical assistance, Armenia set the achievement of the target of 2.07 t/per capita of ecosystem neutral GHG emissions by 2050 (that accounts for 22% of emissions in 1990).

*Long-term low GHG emissions development strategies* are strategic documents that set the measures to achieve the countries' NDC. According to the Paris Agreement (Art. 4), countries shall aim at drawing and informing about the long-term low GHG emissions development strategies. The Conference of the Parties (Decision 1/CP 21, par. 35) suggested the parties submit their long-term strategies to the Secretariate by 2020. Ukraine took the opportunity and submitted their strategy in 2018.<sup>16</sup>

Moldova was one of the first states to start the work on adopting the national strategy back in 2011. In December, 2016, it adopted the 2030 low GHG emissions development strategy and the plan of actions thereto<sup>17</sup>. Due to the update of the NDC, Moldova started revising the current low emission strategy.

Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, and Georgia are currently drawing and approving national low GHG emissions development strategies. The progress is different in different countries and depends on many internal (the readiness of authorities to approve strategic documents and the willingness of stakeholders) and external factors (including available international assistance). For example, Georgia started working on its low GHG emissions development strategy in 2013, and submitted the draft document to the Ministry for Environment Protection and Agriculture in 2017 (the draft was developed with the USAID support, within the project "Enhancing Capacity for Low Emission Development" (EC-LEDS) but the strategy has not been officially adopted yet.<sup>18</sup> Presently, the work has activated to adopt the relevant strategies in the EaP countries due to the EU4Climate project, specifically in Armenia.<sup>19</sup>



## Long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies

National long-term strategic document for reducing GHG emissions while supporting sustainable development of a country. It sets the vision of the country for reaching its commitments on GHG reduction under Paris Agreement and prioritizes the options for mitigating climate change.



## Climate change adaptation strategies

Set mid- and long-term priorities adaptation to climate change. They include analysis of the current and future climate changes and vulnerability assessment to its consequences, suggests ways to reduce future economic, environmental and social losses.

**Table 3.** Long-term low GHG emissions development strategies in the EaP countries

Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine
Ongoing work on adopting the strategy	Ongoing work on adopting the strategy	Intends to adopt the strategy by the end of 2022	Ongoing work on adopting the strategy	In 2016, adopted the 2030 Strategy and an Action Plan thereto.  Ongoing work on updating the strategy.	In 2018 submitted the strategy to the Secretariate of UNFCCC

*National Energy and Climate Plans* are the strategic documents determining the country’s contributions into the achievement of energy and climate targets, and the policy and activities in the country required for their achievement. Focus is made on energy efficiency, renewable energy, GHG emissions reduction, research and innovations. The obligation to adopt them stays with the EU member states, and the member-states of the Energy Community (currently Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine).

In 2020, these three countries shall submit to the Secretariat of the Energy Community the final national energy and climate plans 2021-2030. The progress levels of the states in this area are different, too. The biggest progress has been observed in case of Ukraine<sup>20</sup> where a working group was established on developing the national energy and climate plan, a draft document was drawn and submitted to the Ministry of Energy<sup>21</sup> which continue developing the respective plan<sup>22</sup>. Georgia<sup>23</sup> and Moldova<sup>24</sup> are on the early stages, such as setting up working groups to draw the relevant plans and to conduct political negotiations.

*National climate change adaptation strategies* are strategic documents that set activities to support the achievement of the country’s NDC, along with the low GHG emissions development strategies. At the same time, a key element in the strategies are the measures making the national policy on adaptation to climate change, such as regarding the most vulnerable sectors.

Agriculture and forestry, as well as people’s health, are key adaptation areas for all EaP countries. Water resources and energy are among the priorities for most countries, too. Vulnerability differences show such sectors in the EaP countries as tourism, coastal areas, transport and infrastructure, urban environment and settlements, and the cultural heritage (Table 4).



## Integrated national energy and climate plans

They outline how a country intends to deal with energy security, internal energy market, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, decarbonization of economy and GHG emissions reduction, as well as research and innovation and strengthening competitiveness. Plans describe current situation, key policy directions and measures needed for achieving energy and climate targets.

**Table 4.** *The most vulnerable sectors and key priorities of adaptation in the EaP countries*

	Armenia <sup>25</sup>	Azerbaijan <sup>26</sup>	Belarus <sup>27</sup>	Georgia <sup>28</sup>	Moldova <sup>29</sup>	Ukraine <sup>30</sup>
People's health						
Forestry / ecosystems and biodiversity						
Agriculture						
Water resources						
Energy						
Tourism						
Transport						
Coastal areas						
Urban environment						
Settlements and infrastructure						
Cultural heritage						

The situation in countries is different in terms of progress in drawing strategic documents on climate change adaptation. Adaptation issues are mentioned/ raised in general strategies for social and economic, sustainable, green development, etc. However, the comprehensive consideration is given to the issues on the level of special national and sectoral strategies, programmes, and plans. In 2014, Moldova adopted the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2020, and the Action Plan for its implementation.<sup>31</sup> The latter is considered as the first adaptation plan of action. Currently, Moldova continues to plan adaptation measures, in particular, in the two areas – adoption of the national adaptation plan that covers water resources, people's health, forestry, energy and transport, and the sectoral adaptation plan for agriculture.<sup>32</sup>

Although Belarus does not have any framework climate change adaptation strategy, but in 2019 it adopted sectoral strategic adaptation documents for forestry and agriculture<sup>33</sup>. Georgia drew the Adaptation Plan for agriculture<sup>34</sup> and adopted the National Natural Disasters Risk Mitigation Strategy 2017-2020<sup>35</sup>. The Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, with the technical assistance from GIZ, is developing the Plan of Action for Climate Change Adaptation 2021-2030, expected in 2020.<sup>36</sup>

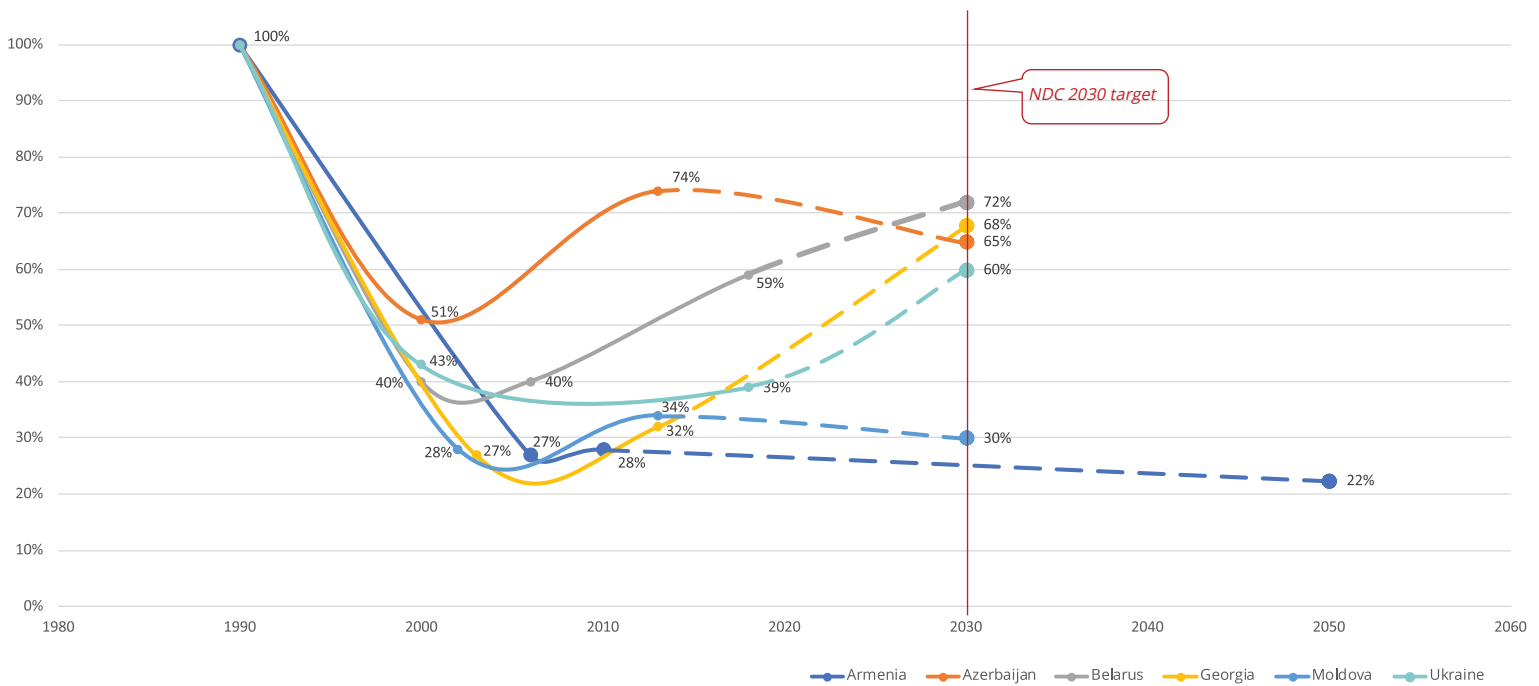
The work has been ongoing for several years to develop strategic adaptation documents also in other EaP countries\*; the progress in the process of adopting national strategies, programmes, and plans is different. Armenia is developing the National climate change adaptation plan relying on the support of the Green Climate Fund; in 2017, it adopted the National Strategy and the Action Plan on Natural Disasters Risk Management.<sup>37</sup> Several years ago, Azerbaijan established a working group to develop the national climate change adaptation plan<sup>38</sup> with support of international organizations, including financial

\* The work on adaptation planning was conducted by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova, within the NAP-GSP programme that supported the process of drawing and implementing national adaptation plans in line with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

support; work has been done on developing strategic documents on climate change adaptation, integrating relevant goals into national and sectoral development programs.<sup>39</sup> In 2020, Ukraine activated the work on the adoption of the relevant strategy trying to engage a broad circle of persons, also from civil society, document development.<sup>40</sup>

The EaP countries set the foundations for their national climate policies, created and empowered public authorities in charge of climate action adaptation, adopted certain strategic documents, and enacted general and special climate legislation. At the same time, climate policy of the EaP countries is on the stage of development and reforming. In the recent years, all EaP countries show the trend towards activation of climate related activities.

**Diagram 11.** GHG emissions and 1st NDCs of EaP countries (% to 1990)



\*Armenia's future emissions levels calculated on the basis of 2,07 t/capita/year of ecosystem neutral emissions of GHG in 2050

Source: UNFCC GNG Data Interface





## Armenia: climate policy progress review (2019-2020)

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In climate policy development in Armenia in 2019-2020, two most significant processes may be distinguished. It is the adoption of the nationally determined contribution and the national adaptation plan. Both documents are under development.

Regarding the new NDC the following aspects shall be mentioned. A new mid-term objective has been foreseen in climate change mitigation, i.e. the 30% GHG emissions reduction by 2030, compared to 1990. In fact, it suggests the 80% increase in emissions, compared to 2016. Besides, the new NDC has not been coordinated with the long-term vision for restricting emissions in Armenia by 2050. The draft NDC states that Armenia is ready to enhance their ambitions and eventually achieve climate neutrality. The provision does not comply with the intentions of the NDC in progress, since the obligations set in the first NDC have been cancelled, on technological and financial instruments. Their absence questions the efficiency of participation of the Republic of Armenia in the Paris Agreement.

Armenia continues to develop the National adaptation plan to promote the mid-term and long-term adaptation planning, with financial support from the Green Climate Fund and due to the UNDP project implementation in Armenia in 2019-2022. In the process of development, 2 - 3 workshops were organized that mentioned the adoption as a basis for the eco-system-based approach to adaptation. The vulnerable sectors highlighted were natural ecosystems, people's health, water resources, agriculture, water power energy, infrastructure, and tourism.

The implementation of financial instruments for adaptation has been provided but they are not specified. It raises concerns as the first NDC has a separate paragraph describing a financial mechanism for the implementation of activities on climate change mitigation and adaptation in the format of "Climate Civil Operating Investment Fund" that shall permanently be refilled at the expense of payments for natural resource use, including the payments for ecosystem services and the carbon tax.



## Azerbaijan : climate policy progress review (2019-2020)

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GHG reduction, climate change mitigation, adaptation measures to some extent are included into policy documents in Azerbaijan. This is true for both general socio-economic and sectoral strategies, plans, development programs. For example, development concept “Azerbaijan 2020: Vision for the future” indicates climate change and global warming as manifestation of planetary environmental balance breach, factors directly influencing economic and social life of the country.

Social-economic development of Azerbaijan is subject to state programs, in particular Regional Development Program of Azerbaijan. Today the country is implementing Strategic Roadmap of National Economic Perspectives of Azerbaijan Republic, including strategic development of 16 sectors. Unfortunately, energy efficiency, GHG reduction and renewables (solar and wind primarily) are reflected only in energy and housing sectors.

In general, by 2025 Azerbaijan plans to reduce energy losses twice, decrease by 12%-15% GHG emissions, achieve 20% of renewables share, decrease significantly transport emissions by promoting electric transport.

On April 15, 2019, Azerbaijan joined EU4Climate project. The project foresees support of national climate policy implementation and practices, including NDC update, development of long-term low emissions development strategy, approximation of national climate legislation to EU standards.



## Belarus: climate policy progress review (2019-2020)

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Upon the ratification of the Paris Agreement in 2016, and the adoption of documents for its implementation, the period of 2019-2020 is characterized with the slowdown in climate policy making of Belarus. It is also seen from the sharp drop of the country's ratings in the Climate Change Performance Index: 23<sup>rd</sup> position in 2018 (of the 60 countries), 29<sup>th</sup> position in 2019, 40<sup>th</sup> position in 2020. The terms for the development of key documents within the Paris Agreement's implementation were extended from 2018 to 2020. With the formal increase in GHG emissions reduction from 28% to 35% by 2030 (according to the official statement at the CP UNFCCC in 2019), this target means a very low decrease since the current emissions level is estimated as 33% reduction compared to 1990. The achievement of the target is intended, among other things, due to the placement into service of the Belarus nuclear power station. In 2019, it adopted an adaptation strategy for forestry and agriculture; the strategy implementation plans are to be developed in the coming years.

In 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and in the context of political crisis, the climate policy priority has been falling. No significant new documents or targets have been adopted but the process is underway to prepare the 7<sup>th</sup> National Communication of the UNFCCC, and the EU4Climate project has been launched. Certain targets on mitigation and adaptation were included in the project under the Programme for Social Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus 2021-2025 but the prioritization of climate agenda in the country's development is rather low; while the reduction target has been set in the strategy at 25% by 2025.

The most notable process is the development of climate strategies for the cities that are signatories of the Covenant of Mayors on climate and energy. Recommendations have been developed on drawing the action plans on sustainable energy development and climate for cities in Belarus. International projects and independent experts suggested a number of documents in the area of integrating climate action into the green urban development plans, green financing, green economy, drawing the low GHG emissions development strategy, etc. The implementation of the proposals largely depends on the country's public policy.



## Georgia: climate policy progress review (2019-2020)

European Green Deal is a response to a global challenge faced by the planet where Georgia is not an exception. In 2019-2020, Georgia had a substantive work performed which mostly is about the legislative process. The Forestry Code has been adopted, and the laws on environmental liability, extended producer responsibility, energy performance of buildings, etc.

It is important to note that according to the statements of the leading environmental organizations, certain decline has been shown in the climate policy of Georgia's government. They include the slow fulfillment of commitments assumed by the state under the Association Agreement with the EU; merging of the Ministry for Environment Protection and Natural Resources with the Ministry of Agriculture; a delayed process of adopting an updated national contribution to the Paris Agreement. To date, the country promises to have the 35% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030, compared to 1990. Moreover, with the available international financial assistance, the target is 50-57%. Currently, Georgia is developing the National plan on energy and climate, parallel to the Action plan on mitigation of climate change and the update of the NDC. In any respect, much needs to be done to optimize climate targets of Georgia in different sectors on national and local levels, and to implement its NDC into specific strategies and projects, with the clearly set targets and tasks.

It shall be noted that the cities in Georgia that signed the Covenant of Mayors on climate and energy undertook the target to reach the 20% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction by 2020, thus contributing to the development of green economy and improved living conditions. 10 cities in Georgia have already presented their Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAP) but they have not been monitored or implemented thereafter. Currently, due to the COVID epidemic, they are adjusting reporting timelines as to the targets.



## Moldova: climate policy progress review (2019-2020)

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In the beginning of 2020, the NDC-2 was submitted. According to it, Moldova undertook to unconditionally reduce GHG emissions by 70% by 2030 (compared to 1990 levels). Provided the financial, technical, and technological support of the development partners, the reduction may reach 88% compared to 1990.

Presently, Moldova started to draw the second National Adaptation Plan (NAP-2), with the key objective to:

- ✓ improve the coordination of the national mechanism of climate change adaptation management;
- ✓ improve long-term capacity of planning and implementation of adaptation actions with the help of climate change adaptation technologies;
- ✓ improve planning in forest management, health care, energy, and transport.

In the area of waste management, a new National Action Plan is under development. In addition, an agreement has been signed to obtain a loan of EUR 100 mln. to implement pilot projects in several regions. Certain progress has been made on extended producer responsibility.

On the one hand, Moldova may boast of a rather fast adoption of international climate policy documents. Regardless, we may state that the policies remain on paper, and the specific implementation of plans and tasks is out of question. Political class has little interest in the climate agenda.



## Ukraine: climate policy progress review (2019-2020)

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In 2019-2020, Ukraine activated its work in climate area. In the early 2019, it adopted a new Environmental Strategy that set the vectors of the public green policy by 2030, including on climate change. The national policy follows two tracks, such as to mitigate climate change through the GHG emissions reduction and through adaptation to climate change.

Certain progress of Ukraine can be seen in the track of mitigating climate change. For example, in 2019, the Parliament of Ukraine adopted the laws that set the principles for monitoring, reporting, and verification of GHG emissions, and the peculiarities of economic operations with ozone-depleting substances and fluorinated greenhouse gases. In September, 2020, the government specified the terms and procedures for monitoring and reporting on GHG emissions. The work is about to be finalized on the adoption of an integrated national energy and climate plan, as well as the development of the second NDC.

In part of adaptation to climate change, Ukraine's climate policy fares worse than mitigation aspects; no required documents have been adopted. In 2020, the work has activated on the adoption of Ukraine's 2030 Framework climate change adaptation strategy. In 2019, a draft sectoral strategy was developed on the adaptation of agriculture, forestry, and fishery. However, it failed to reach the adoption of the relevant document. It shall be noted that virtually all significant reforms in Ukraine's climate policy, both on adaptation aspects, and on climate change mitigation, are implemented with international support, in particular with the financial assistance from the EU.

In the recent years, the interest of the parliament of Ukraine has grown, too. In 2020, the Parliamentary committee on environmental policy and use of natural resources held round tables with a broad range of stakeholders on the role of the parliament in the climate policy, and on the challenges of creating national emissions trading. In September, 2020, a Subcommittee on climate change and atmospheric air protection was established.



# 2

Chapter II.  
**Non-governmental  
organizations in the  
Eastern Partnership  
countries and their  
impact on climate  
policy**

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## 2.1. NGOs working on climate change in the EaP countries

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According to our estimates, there are about 85 NGOs in the EaP countries directly engaged with climate change issues. In terms of their impact, the NGOs can be divided into international, national, and local. There is no organization among them focusing on climate change exclusively. At the same time, the region has networks (associations) focused on activities in the field of climate change. Each of the EaP countries under analysis has organizations with over 10 years of experience of environmental, and further, of climate activities. In the recent years, there has been a clear trend to shape climate change as a separate area of work of eco-NGOs.

There is an unequal distribution of such organizations by countries where Ukraine outweighs all other EaP region's countries. In some countries, there are only 2 or 3 organizations active in climate change.

**legal forms.** We can provisionally identify six such forms (Table 5). It shall be noted that NGOs do not usually strive for wide membership (over 100 persons).

The organizations dealing with climate change usually qualify themselves as citizens associations but there are also some other **organizational**



**Table 5.** *Main organizational legal forms of NGOs dealing with climate change in the EaP countries.*

Citizens associations	Public unions	Associations	Professional unions	Coalitions	Networks
<p>A civic group with natural persons as members (participants).</p> <p>Usually, all the CSOs under analysis have the citizens association status.</p> <p>Few NGOs have the objectives to only improve and implement climate policy. They mostly operate in the related subject areas, such as atmospheric air protection, forest conservation, protection of environmental rights of citizens and of vulnerable groups, sustainable transport.</p>	<p>A public union founded by private law legal entities, while members (participants) may include both legal and physical persons.</p> <p>Combination of membership of organizations and individuals in environment protection, they act as networks but accept individual membershi, unlike networks.</p>	<p>A form of public unions.</p> <p>Usually, they bring together supporters of certain areas of climate policy, such as wind energy, bioenergy, solar and renewable energy, waste management, etc.</p>	<p>A voluntary non-profit public organization that brings together citizens around shared interests in their professional (work-related) activities (studies).</p> <p>Usually, they bring together supporters working in the ecology areas.</p>	<p>Certain NGOs that work in a coordinated way within a country or several countries as members of the coalition on the basis of the shared goal and they pursue changes in the government policy and practices or in international law<sup>41</sup>.</p> <p>Coalitions may come together around a strategic long-term objective – 100% renewable energy by 2050 or a short-term target, such as including environment and climate-related agenda to programs of candidates at elections.</p>	<p>Non-formal, usually “horizontal” unions of organizations brought together around the climate policy; they are coordinated through joint effort of elected representatives.</p> <p>Climate networks are not available in all EaP countries.</p>

The **key issues** addressed by the region’s NGOs are:

- ✓ Climate policy is not prioritized among other areas of public policy.
- ✓ Imperfect legal framework for climate policy, its fragmentary gaps, inefficiency of climate policy implementation mechanisms, certain elements are not available in full or in part.
- ✓ The distribution of functions between authorities is not clear enough, low coordination of action and institutional capacity in climate policy making and implementation.
- ✓ No systemic approach in climate policy making, no coordination of climate policy with environmental and energy laws.

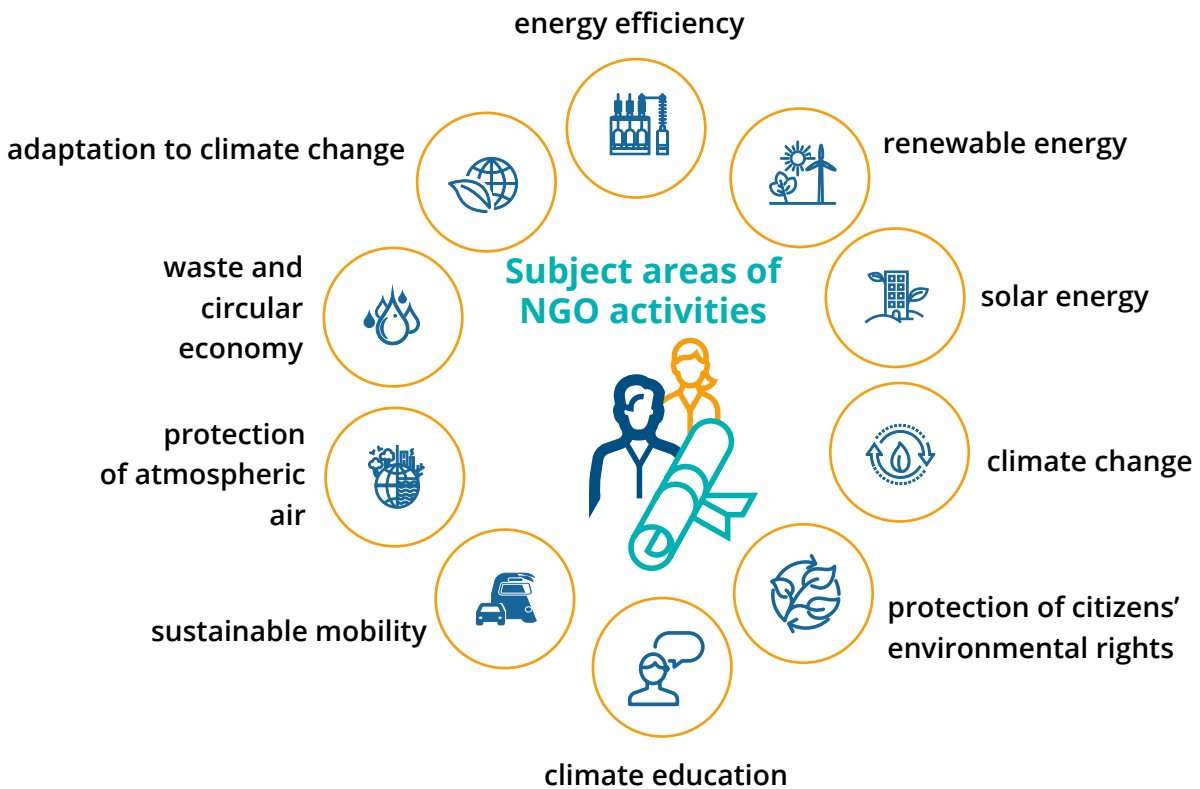
- ✓ Lack of qualitative research on climate, energy, EGD, or carbon neutrality.
- ✓ Low awareness of civil society and public authorities on causes and effects of climate change and the EGD.

Selective analysis of survey data of member organizations of a regional network for climate action from the EaP countries for 2019 shows that NGOs work in such **subject areas** of climate

policy as climate change (including emissions reduction), adaptation to climate change, renewable energy, awareness building and raising, sustainable mobility, energy efficiency, forest protection and others (Chart 1).

At the same time, there are crucial differences between countries in the level of activism of NGOs in certain subject areas, and as regards the key subject area of their initiatives (see Table 6).

**Chart 1.** Subject areas of NGO activities







**Table 6.** *Subject areas in the operations of NGOs related to climate change, in 2019-2020*

<b>Countries/</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>	<b>Belarus</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>Armenia</b>	<b>Azerbaijan</b>	<b>Moldova</b>
<b>NGO activities</b>						
Introduction and update of the nationally determined contributions	+	-	+	+	-	-
Enhancement of reliable schemes for measurement, reporting, and verification of GHG emissions	+	-	+	-	-	-
Drafting of national low emission development / decarbonization strategies by 2050	+	-	+	+	-	+
100% renewable energy by 2050	+	-	+	-	-	-
Just transition of coal mining regions	+	-	-	-	-	-
European Green Deal – national level	+	-	-	-	-	-
“Green recovery” after the COVID-crisis	+	-	-	-	-	-
Approximation of climate and energy law with the EU acquis	+	+	+	+	-	+
Integration of climate into other sectors of economy (green economy), interinstitutional awareness and sectoral areas in the implementation of Paris Agreement	+	+	-	-	-	+
Climate investment and divestment, de-financing of fossil fuels industry	+	-	-	-	-	-
Climate change adaptation strategies	+	+	+	+	+	+

Countries/	Ukraine	Belarus	Georgia	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Moldova
<b>NGO activities</b>						
Pilot projects in the area of emissions reduction and adaptation to climate change (energy cooperatives, revolving funds, installing renewable energy facilities on the rooftops of socially significant buildings, implementation of nature based solutions)	+	+	+	+	-	+
Development of local climate policies, strategies and programmes	+	+	+	+	-	+
Informing about the areas of climate policy making and implementation and awareness building for population	+	+	+	+	+	+
Highlighting climate policy issues – climate activism and direct action	+	-	+	+	+	+
Engaging broad audiences and capacity building of climate action: development programmes, trainings, policy workshops, education, awareness raising, media work	+	+	+	+	-	+

Analysis of activities of NGOs working on climate change highlights the following key **forms of work**:

-  advocacy;
-  research and expertise;
-  awareness building and raising;
-  leadership showcase.

**Advocacy** is about impacting decision-makers (public councils at the ministries, work with parliamentary committees and in coalitions for reforms), monitoring of authorities for the implementation of action plans, criticism and proposals for the implementation of climate policy by the central authorities (permitting system, emission trading system, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions tax, emission monitoring, their verification and cadaster maintaining, etc.), facilitation and strengthening of relations and cooperation

between authorities and the public, participation in international climate negotiations, etc.

For example, regular cooperation of authorities and CSOs is an important form of engagement for the inclusive climate policy making since the parliament's powers include the development and adoption of the necessary laws, whereas, ministries shall make climate policy and monitor its implementation. That is why working meetings with MPs from the dedicated parliamentary committees, participation in public hearings and in public councils at the ministries are important advocacy tools in the region.

The scope and limits of the cooperation are very different in the countries under analysis. Ministries often monopolize the work on the draft documents and only "inform" the public about the outputs. In Azerbaijan, in 2010, a Public Environmental Council was established at the Ministry for Environment and Natural Resources, consisting of 14 members, and updated in 2019. In recent years the council has not considered issues related to climate or other areas of EDG. In Ukraine, the council had operated before 2018, with 30 civil society representatives; they are currently in the process of re-establishing with the re-incorporation of the Ministry of Environment, after the failed merger with the Ministry of Energy<sup>42</sup>. In Georgia, Ministry for Environment was liquidated in 2018, and currently its functions have been assumed and merged with the Ministry for Agriculture. In Armenia, the Ministry website lists 31 NGOs cooperating with the Ministry, there is no acting public council; but in practice, according to national NGOs, participation mechanisms of civil society in policy making have been restricted by the law. The participatory procedures such as public discussions and public hearings have no legal effect and create the illusion of participation. In Belarus, the public council at the Ministry for Environment includes 24 civil society representatives. The website lists all available minutes of meetings, since 2015<sup>43</sup>. However, the public opinion is not accounted in climate policy making<sup>44</sup>.

Public criticism of the climate policy making and implementation is usually targeting non-transparent and under-communicated processes of CSO involvement into the discussions of draft legal acts. Authorities would often inform too late, and the CSOs learn about the intentions to change policies at the moment when the rapid response is due. For example, in Ukraine NGO representatives learned about the government's plans to cancel the requirement for local self-government bodies to endorse the natural gas extraction from the Minister's statement during the presentation of the Concept for Green Energy Transition of Ukraine 2050<sup>45</sup>.

Organization and mobilization of their supporters for direct action campaigns in order to exert pressure on authorities for the sake of adopting a socially preferable decision is a common form of activities for climate-oriented NGOs. Since 2015,<sup>46</sup> the EaP countries, especially Ukraine and Georgia, there have been the birth of the intersectoral\* movement for climate direct campaigns (climate activism). The largest campaign in the history of the EaP countries was the 2019 Climate March in Kyiv<sup>47</sup>. It was the first time they laid down the demands for the New Green Deal and brought together the organizations active not only in environment protection but also in animal protection, waste management, LGBT rights, human rights NGOs, local green NGOs from 21 cities of Ukraine, opinion leaders, politicians, public officials, 10 co-organizing NGOs and about 40 partners from NGOs. Following the march and the preceding advocacy campaign of the coalition, there was developed a 2050 Concept for "green" energy transition of Ukraine (the Ukrainian Green Deal). However, with the change of political course, and replacement of the Ministry's executives, stays as a draft concept. It is important that the concept took into account the NGO demands, and enshrined the possibility for government's financial support to the cities' initiative to shift to 100% renewable energy, the same as the Covenant of Mayors<sup>48</sup>. Nevertheless, the Concept set the 70% reduction target by 2050, and 100% target by 2070, which the public are not

\* A movement made of the NGOs focusing on the impact on climate policy making as their primary objective.

happy about,<sup>49</sup> and which is not in line with the EGD targets.

In Georgia, too, there was a numerous march with over 1,000 citizens who demanded the government's course towards the 100% renewable energy. In all the EaP countries, except for Belarus, in 2019-2020 there took place the "strikes for climate" organized by youth which drew attention to climate crisis and demanded from politicians address it promptly.



Growing role of local climate policy in achieving EGD targets is notable<sup>50</sup>.

Over 100 cities in the world joined the "Climate Neutral Cities by 2050" initiative<sup>51</sup>. The declarations of cities to transit to 100% renewable energy by 2050 in Ukraine and Georgia had a positive effect on public participation in climate targets setting and on the development of national policies of Ukraine and Georgia for 100% renewable energy, and prepared a public discourse for the adoption of EGD targets<sup>52</sup>.

Ukraine is the only EaP country where NGOs started a public campaign "Ukraine Needs the Green Deal."

**Research and expertise** is the form of work to develop alternative strategies or other policy papers, to draw independent analytical reports, policy-making, and conduct research on the preconditions for climate policy making and implementation.

To illustrate the alternative documents developed by the public, we can consider the process of revising the NDC in Ukraine. In 2019, as part of revising the NDC, civil society in Ukraine was developing a Roadmap for Climate Targets in Ukraine by 2030<sup>53</sup>. These are the provisions for energy generation and consumption sector, for buildings, transport, waste management, agriculture and forestry, and land use that are achievable for Ukraine and will lead to the reduction of GHG emissions in each sector. Their goal is to set the ambitious climate targets from

the civil society, and to account for them when drawing the National Energy and Climate Plan. The document was drawn as part of the project funded by the German Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection, and Nuclear Safety within the International Climate Initiative programme, through the "Union of Environment Protection and Nature of Germany" NGO, and the DRA and Brot für die Welt. The Roadmap has been supported by national organizations, the coalition, networks, associations, one international organization, and 2 professional communities, which shows a broad public support for the ambitious climate goals. The Roadmap of Climate Targets from NGOs is the only document of the kind in the EaP countries.

Independent and impartial scientific research is a good basis for the joint and lasting advocacy of NGOs and the systemic networking of the organizations for the achievement of EGD targets on national levels. Conducting analytical studies is a widespread practice in some countries in the region. In 2020, some NGOs drew first national analytical papers on the opportunities of the EGD for some countries. In particular, in Ukraine, several such papers have been delivered<sup>54</sup>, in Belarus, they are being drawn. Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Armenia have not been so active in the EGD context. In Azerbaijan, active development is seen in the areas of energy efficiency and transport. National NGO Forum of Azerbaijan often gets commissioned on social issues to promote some political or law drafting initiatives. This provides for a forum to discuss and coordinate such documents as economic development programs, roadmaps, social law drafting initiatives. Since EDG is not a priority on governmental agenda, this policy is has not been discussed at the forum in the recent years. In Georgia, national scientific research within research institutes was almost entirely interrupted since 2006, and the issues of developing the EGD were impeded with no available scientific base. Besides, scenarios (model analysis) have been developed for transition of Zhytomyr city (Ukraine)<sup>55</sup> and Kutaisi city (Georgia)<sup>56</sup> to the 100% renewable energy in the power balance by 2050, "Incentivization of Distributed Generation in the 4<sup>th</sup> Energy Package

of the EU." How the new EU energy law creates better conditions and new markets for distributed generation and which approaches could be applied in Ukraine." <sup>57</sup>

**Expert law drafting** is widespread as a form of work; it is about the development of legal regulatory acts or participation in working groups to develop the drafts, comments, and proposals to draft laws.

A very common form of work is **awareness building and raising** by NGOs, both general (on the problem and causes of climate change, and the effects), and special (reporting about the progress and outcomes of international negotiations, interacting with the media, various trainings and education programmes). For example, NGOs are usually very active in international climate negotiations and inform about them in a timely and exhaustive manner.

**Leadership showcase** is a special form of work typical for NGOs active in climate change area; for

convenience, we included the following forms of activities:

- ✓ unlocking the leadership potential of local communities, local initiatives, and local authorities, and the technical assistance to them in achieving climate policy objectives (climate workshops, trainings for energy managers at hospitals and amalgamated hromadas, climate leadership programmes, forum of climate ambitions of cities).
- ✓ Implementation of real-life cases of possible changes /practical solutions (pilot projects and innovations in renewable energy, energy cooperatives, revolver funds, solar power stations on rooftops of public buildings, start-ups, etc.).

Therefore, there are many non-governmental organizations active in the region that present a variety of activities targeting climate issues.

## 2.2. Engagement of NGOs in key processes related to climate policy

Climate change issues are not only in focus of climate policies (emissions reduction or adaptation to climate change), but also in other processes: national energy and climate plans, development of renewable energy, low emission development strategy, energy strategies, efforts on the level of cities. In general, NGOs show different participation levels in these processes in different EaP countries.

Climate change largely affects most vulnerable social groups. Therefore, NGOs representing social interests shall be included into the **process of developing the NDC**, to monitor the process and comment the draft contribution on all stages of its development. NGOs of the EaP countries are meant to actively participate in the development of updated nationally determined contributions of the EaP countries.

At the same time, NGOs in different EaP countries have different opportunities to engage with the official process of NDC development and discussion. In Ukraine, NGOs are included into the working group at the Ministry of Energy\* on NDC development, and can criticize it for the “ignorance for climate crisis, that it was not taken into account in the country’s policy making, and no counter-action was suggested.”<sup>58</sup> Of the three scenarios developed in Ukraine, none of them meets the objective for climate neutrality by 2050. NGOs believe there is a compromise in a so-called combined scenario<sup>59</sup> that provides for 72% emissions reduction, compared to 1990, by 2030, and the 86% reduction in 2050, which is insufficient for the EGD targets. However, of the available proposals, they are an acceptable interim option. The NDC development process was open in Georgia. Upon public discussions,

NGOs provided a package of recommendations on raising the ambitiousness of the NDC.

Regretfully, not all EaP countries have the conditions when NGOs are able to participate in the work on the NDC. In Armenia, NGOs had to organize an alternative event inviting a national coordinator and representatives of the sectoral ministry and the related ministries, after no national NGOs were invited to join the working group or the public discussion. The NDC text was not published for public discussion and the NGOs had to find the informal ways to reach it, to be able to express their comments. In Belarus, involvement of NGOs into public discussions is formal; whereas, there has been no public discussion on the NDC in the past three years. There is an interagency group on climate change at the line Ministry; they mostly work in a format of mutual information exchange. It includes several representatives from civil society. In Moldova, a consulting workshop was organized to discuss the NDC but civil society was not included into the drafting process. In Azerbaijan, the national forum of NGOs and public council at the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources have not discussed such issues in recent years. General interest to environment and climate change in the society is low and is not a priority activity of NGOs involved in the above mentioned platforms.

**National energy and climate plans** in Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova are in the process of development. In Ukraine, a draft plan is on the stage of final approval at the Ministry for Energy; NGOs are looking forward to the draft’s publication and the public hearing. In Georgia and Moldova, the work is ongoing on the draft document content.

\* When the Working Group was established on the NDC development in Ukraine, functions of the Ministry for Environment were transferred to the Ministry of Energy.



In all the EaP countries, the **2050 low emission development strategies** are either under development or have been completed.

The low emissions development strategy in Ukraine and the action plan for implementation of the first stage of “Reforming the Energy Sector (by 2020)” submitted in 2018 raised a series of criticism from the public because of the low reduction targets, such as the 20% reduction compared to the 2010 levels, and 25% of renewable energy by 2050, and for continued prioritized use of fossil fuels<sup>60</sup>. In Ukraine, it was even suggested to create a Decarbonization Fund, and the NGOs already provided their feedback.<sup>61</sup> If the Ukraine’s low emission development strategy and policy are not revised and funded in the package of economic incentives for “green” recovery after COVID-19, emission levels might resume and even exceed the anticipated 2030 levels, despite the lower economic growth rates<sup>62</sup>.

The situation with strategies is similar in other EaP countries. NGOs either criticize them for low ambition or challenge the efficiency of their future implementation.

The strategy and other documents on climate policy are mostly developed by international development programmes and by experts engaged in the process of allocating technical assistance to the EaP countries. It is a motivation to draw the relevant documents on climate policy, but it is often not conducive to the feeling of ownership and responsibility for the implementation of the documents with local stakeholders.



## Position of the Ukrainian Climate Network on the creation of the Decarbonization Fund of November, 9, 2020 (example):

“To reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the Ministry of Energy shall stop supporting the development and subsidizing of coal mining industry.

It is important to fulfil the National Emissions Reduction Plan from Large-Scale Incineration Installations.

For the Decarbonization Fund to achieve its targets, a Decarbonization Strategy shall be drawn.

The money from the Decarbonization Fund shall not be reimbursed to the polluting companies because it breaks the “polluter pays” principle.

The procedure for using the funds shall be transparent and understandable.

The tax rate for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions shall be increased because today it is too low to finance the large projects. The increase will incentivize companies to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions and use the renewable energy sources<sup>63</sup>.

Although on a global scale the NDC shall be calculated proportionate to the share of the country’s emissions, all cities are also responsible for reduction of emissions and shall develop local climate targets, both for emissions reduction and for the adaptation to climate change. In 2018-2020, the work of NGOs on the development of local climate policy continued to be active. As a

rule, NGOs work in cities on the implementation and promotion of energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change.

Regardless of the nationally adopted documents on climate policy, cities in the EaP countries are not usually developing their detailed climate targets for emissions reduction and adaptation

to climate change, and do not include climate into strategic priorities in local development programmes. The available targets are based on SEAPs (before 2015 ) and SEAP-C developed within the Covenant of Mayors on climate and energy (if the cities officially joined the Covenant of Mayors on climate and energy) and on the few urban and local programmes on climate change adaptation.

In the recent years, the priorities have also included the implementation of renewable energy projects. The period of 2017-2020 faced the consolidation of joint efforts of NGOs in the 100% renewable energy transition in Ukraine, Georgia, and Belarus. The research on “Transition of Ukraine to Renewable Energy by 2050” conducted in partnership with the CSOs, public authorities, sectoral associations, and independent experts<sup>64</sup> provided the economic and technical justification for the country's 100% renewable energy transition in 2017 . A similar study was prepared by NGOs in Belarus in 2018<sup>65</sup>. In Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, there have been no special studies on transition to 100% renewable energy by 2050.

Official statements are the commitments of certain cities in the region (7 cities in Ukraine and 1 city in Georgia) on the renewable energy transition in the power balance by 2050 undertaken in the cooperation with NGOs, thus incentivizing public participation in the energy transition.

However, in Ukraine, as of November, 2020, targets have not been achieved of the National Action Plan on Renewable Energy 2020<sup>66</sup> as to the 11% of the total share of renewable energy, the targets of the 2035 Energy Strategy of Ukraine have been updated. Moreover, a conflicting

situation was created with the recourse reduction of payments under the “green” tariff which entails financial and reputational losses to the state, whereas, the renewable energy development is risking to lose the investments into this area. In two years, the NGO Coalition has drawn 10 policy papers, collected and transferred 14,000 signatures on the Ukraine's transition to the 100% renewable energy by 2050, managed to win the green tariff for small generation, and run many awareness raising webinars on renewable energy. The first feasibility studies have been developed for Zhytomyr city transition scenarios<sup>67</sup> (Ukraine) and for Kutaisi city (Georgia) to the 100% renewable energy.

In the EaP countries, there is the ongoing process of developing and introducing changes to **energy strategies** that are often criticized by NGOs for the too low the targets for renewable energy transition. Not all EaP countries have NGOs active in promoting renewable energy targets.

One of the key issues in the EGD are the socially and economically **“just transition”** from coal to renewable energy and transformation of the coal-mining regions. Presently, it is implemented in Ukraine with the effort of three NGOs<sup>68</sup>. Currently, it is not relevant for Armenia, Belarus<sup>69</sup>, and Moldova<sup>70</sup>, where the coal extraction is not practiced, and it is a non-issue for Georgia (2 coal mines). In Ukraine, in May, 2020, a coordination center on the transformation of coal mining regions of Ukraine which NGOs may join, when required, the Concept for the Reform of Coal Mining was developed<sup>71</sup>.

**In Georgia, on the Global Day of Climate Action in 2018, over 1,000 citizens of Kutaisi demanded the mayor's office announce the transition to the 100% renewable energy, and the city council delivered. In 2019, in Poltava (Ukraine), at the session of the city council, in response to the pressure from the public, 32 council deputies approved the signing and implementation of the Memorandum on the city's transition to the 100% renewable energy by 2050 . It means that local communities do realize the importance of clean energy transition and demand the government's focus on climate policy.**

## 2.3. Organizational development of climate-oriented NGOs and challenges in their activities

Civil society organizations in the EaP countries show high networking capacity and consolidation of efforts in climate action but their activities are still dependent on foreign financing. The organizations are often operating in the context of limited political space and face certain challenges in their activities, due to the peculiarities of national climate policy making.

Capacity building of NGOs are about the strengthening of their capabilities through the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world. Today, an important element in capacity building is the transformation generated and sustained over time unassisted<sup>72</sup>. The objective of NGO and community capacity building in the EaP countries is to gradually achieve sustainable development goals. The EGD is also using the approach in the European Climate Pact.

In the EaP region, **capacity building of local NGOs** is the objective of many programmes, both of international development agencies, and international NGOs and “green” funds. Capacity building involves the support in innovations and technical assistance in the climate policy development and implementation, strategic planning, adaptive management, monitoring for target achievement, and analysis of the achieved social change, the development of climate leadership of NGOs and communities, cooperation practices and the ability to engage supporters. Capacity building of NGOs is also achieved through the informal education trainings and the development of “green” information resources (such as the “Program of Climate Leadership “Activate the Energy” (Ukraine), Climate Box<sup>73</sup> (Moldova), Green Camps (Georgia), Green Portal (Belarus)).

Mission and values are essential for climate NGOs and most nature protection NGOs. That is why they do not accept any money from the polluting companies. Local experts engaged in our research stated that the NGOs in their countries are fully **dependent on the grant funding** (Georgia, Belarus, Moldova, Armenia, Ukraine), and sometimes they face lack of social support for their activities (Armenia). Azerbaijan is the only country in the EaP where the government offers resources to support NGOs and prohibits NGOs to accept foreign grants. However, it often leads to a situation that NGOs are commissioned by the government in some strategic areas. This does not contribute to NGOs independency. In most cases, governments are trying to clearly regulate the work of NGOs, which in some cases (such as in Belarus) complicates their work and kills their opportunities<sup>74</sup>.

According to the analysis of reports and publications by NGOs, major financial resources used by NGOs in the EaP countries come as grants from international organizations and foundations. The donors include German political foundations, such as the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, also Robert Bosch Stiftung, Brot für die Welt, Bankwatch, DRA, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency SIDA and its many national partners, MitOst, Global Giving, US Embassy, USAID, McArthur Foundation; international funds, such as the “Renaissance” (George Soros fund), Global Green Grants, US Embassy, Embassies of the UK, Norway,

Netherlands, Canada, Eastern Partnership Forum (EU), etc. There are few cases when NGOs from the EaP countries are making use of the “small” fundraising at the cost of individual citizens who support the activities; there are no private funds or family foundations that could finance the independent climate action of NGOs and activities under the EGD, like in the USA and the EU.

**The NGOs in the EaP region have a special feature such as active networking and cooperation between the civil society organizations.** Regular communication is vital for the NGOs shared action. It is largely organized and maintained by networks or coordinating organizations.

NGOs that work on the development and implementation of climate policy know about each other within the country and keep in touch. There is a coordination and communication support between the EaP countries for the regional network of climate action.<sup>75</sup> It includes 31 organizations and two networks from all the EaP countries. Support for climate leadership and the organization of climate campaigns comes from international organizations. Expert and research organizations in each country are coordinated by groups of three national platforms of the EaP Forum. Youth climate

groups in each EaP country are centrally coordinated by an international center for global youth climate movement.

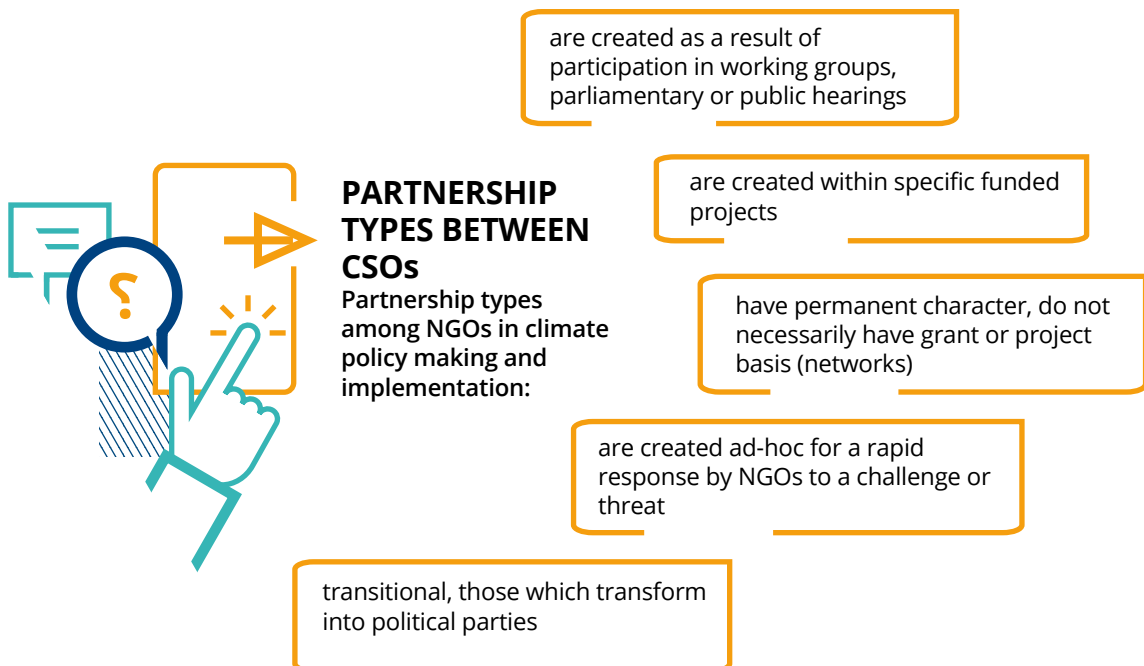
The climate network has been created in one of the six EaP countries, the same as the coalition of organizations on the 100% renewable energy transition (in Ukraine). In Georgia and Azerbaijan, the coordination is administered by one of the leading national organizations; in Armenia and Moldova, the organizations do not have any coordination; in Belarus, the goals of the national network (that has both organizational and individual membership) include green economy while the coalitions mentioned above focus on climate policy, adaptation to climate change and cities, sustainable energy, 100% renewable energy transition by 2050.

The **NGO partnerships covered by the study** that are created between NGOs in climate policy making and implementation may be grouped into the five types (See Chart 2).

The **critical obstacles** faced by NGOs in their work on climate policy impact are the following:

- ✓ Changes in the political system of countries and in political regimes that affect the scope and limitations of the NGO rights and activities.

**Chart 2.** Partnership types between CSOs



- ✓ Lack of state support to NGO activities and the continuous search for external financial resources.
- ✓ Significant investment of the government and financial institutions into fossil fuels, inefficient monitoring system and no responsibility for breaking the law for big businesses.
- ✓ The policy making often fails to coordinate among the parliament and the sectoral ministries, which often results into low ambition of climate targets in the legal and regulatory acts.
- ✓ Scarce communication of authorities with NGOs, and breaches of procedures for public participation in adopting climate related decisions.
- ✓ Authorities attempt to keep the status quo in fossil fuels and reduce emissions at the same time.
- ✓ Absence of certain elements in the implementation mechanism of climate policy and the EGD, which makes the implementation impossible or inefficient.

Finally, political and legal space in some EaP countries imposes serious restrictions on the activity of CSOs, particularly through limited access to international financing, political, criminal, and other persecutions. E.g., systemic limitations to receive financial grant assistance are faced in Belarus and Azerbaijan. In other countries, demands keep being raised to strengthen “control” over the funding and activities of NGOs.



# 3

Chapter III.  
**Vision for the future  
development of  
climate policy in the  
Eastern Partnership  
countries, the NGOs  
role and place  
in this process**

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## 3.1. The EGD impact on promotion of climate issues within the EaP

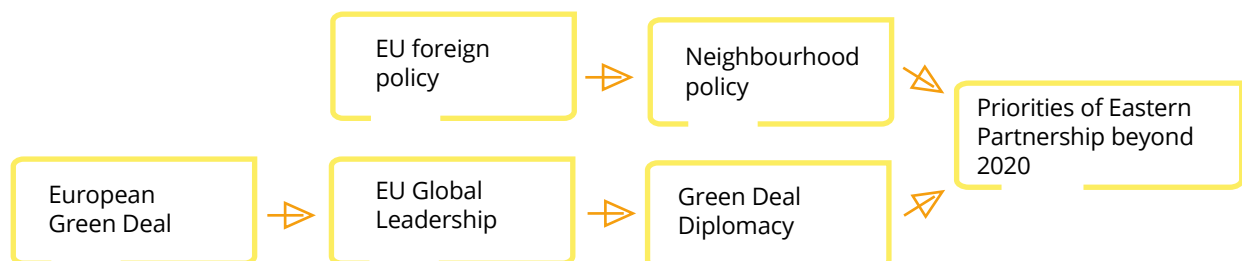
The EU sees the achievement of the climate targets in its global leadership to implement the ambitious environmental, climate, and energy policies all over the world. For that end, it will employ the mechanisms of EGD diplomacy, trade policy, support to development, economic and financial adjustment mechanisms.

According to the EGD, the European Union will be implementing the necessary measures, also on the bilateral platforms, and focus on support to the closest neighbours.

If we consider Eastern Partnership as an instrument of the EU foreign policy, the EGD impact mechanism could be presented in the following manner: the European Green Deal foresees the EU global leadership as an objective and the “Green Deal Diplomacy” as an instrument to achieve it, and it will impact the EU foreign policy which tool is the Eastern Partnership. In the whole, it will determine the EGD impact on the future priorities of Eastern Partnership (Chart 3).

**Climate change has been mainstreamed into the future priorities of Eastern Partnership beyond 2020.** Environmental and climate resilience is included among the five new proposed priorities of Eastern Partnership. It will have a definitive impact in the future practical instruments of cooperation under the EaP, and on the climate policies of Eastern Partners towards raising their ambitiousness and relevance on national agendas. The integration of climate aspects into the future policy of Eastern Partnership resulted from the long-term political priorities of the EU, in particular those set in the European Green Deal.

**Chart 3.** *The EGD impact mechanism on Eastern Partnership priorities.*



## 3.2. The EGD impact on the promotion of climate issues on a national level

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**Integration of climate aspects into the priorities of Eastern Partnership will impact the future practical tools for cooperation under the EaP**, and on the climate policies of Eastern Partners towards raising their ambitiousness and relevance on national agendas.

The potential impact on the EaP countries is possible due to the implementation of diplomatic, trade, and financial instruments on the EU part that would include both supportive and encouraging measures, and the additional financial influence instruments. The possible instruments considered by the EU include the following:

- ✓ establishment of innovative cooperation formats. For example, through the introduction of individual geographic strategies with account for local contexts and needs; green programmes; reinforcement of partner relations on specific issues of climate, energy, and environment; conclusion of “green alliances”;
- ✓ inclusion of an obligation to follow and enforce the Paris Agreement into the future EU comprehensive trade agreements; impact on the establishment of international standards applied in the global value chains which will influence further trade in goods and services; restricted access to EU markets of goods and services that do not account for or do not conform with the EU climate and environment standards;
- ✓ development of international carbon markets in order to create economic incentives for climate action;
- ✓ flattening out of climate ambitions through the introduction of the carbon border adjustment that will reduce carbon leakage and more precisely reflect carbon content in the price of imported goods.

It shall be highlighted that international technical assistance has a huge impact on climate change national policies of EaP countries, particularly from the EU. Some EaP countries see this support as a precondition for the ambitiousness of their climate targets.

In the recent years, almost all EaP countries relied in their climate policy making on support from the EU technical assistance projects. We anticipate that all the EU technical assistance will soon be integrating the EGD targets (also for climate). It leads to the conclusion that the **EU technical assistance will be an important instrument for practical impact of the EGD on national climate policies in the EaP countries.**

The COVID-19 pandemic response may largely reduce the EGD impact on the national policy in general, since the EaP countries do not presently show any understanding or practical intentions to account for environmental or climate implications in their response to social and economic effects of the pandemic and in the economic recovery plans (despite the general political statements by some countries to abide by the “green recovery” principles).



In general, **the climate policy of EaP countries in the coming years will be affected by the EU on a systemic basis, with a view of increasing its ambitiousness.** Further integration of climate issues into other related national policies shall be expected, predominantly into energy-related.

### 3.3. The EGD impact on the operation of NGOs in the Eastern Partnership countries

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In general, the raised climate priorities due to the EGD implementation will create **new favourable conditions for the climate-related NGOs:** these issues will receive additional political drivers on a national level; increase in funding for this area shall be expected, also for the operation of such NGOs.

To benefit from the new opportunities, climate NGOs shall enhance their capacity, such as to work with each other and engage social support and local finances, to reinforce research capacity of their work, and improve strategic planning.

Higher prioritization of climate aspects will also impact key challenges faced by climate NGOs in their work. The impact may be both positive and negative, and requires additional analysis and consideration in the NGO operation.

In particular, **the excessively “aggressive” EU action (such as the carbon border adjustment) may aggravate the working space of climate NGOs,** especially in the countries where the space has been limited for political reasons. The coercion coming from the EU may provoke an active negative response of governments and rupture in society and among the NGOs because of climate issues. The “small but proud” countries have long been raising the issue of fairness and put it as a central argument for their positions on GHG reduction (it is also evidenced by the NDCs of certain countries where the “differentiated” responsibility approach for climate change has been central).

Achievement of EGD targets implies the use of environmental policy tools in general: government regulation of the use of natural resources, environmental awareness, mechanisms of environment impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment, monitoring and environment protection control, financial and economic instruments, environmental accounting and green e-governance, eco-certification, labelling, eco-governance, and eco-audit. It implies **new requirements for the functioning of all other environmental NGOs in the EaP countries, not only climate-oriented.**

Since climate change is an overarching topic of the EGD the issue becomes cross-cutting also for the non-government sector: climate change will permeate the agenda of NGOs in all key areas of their activities. It poses new challenges for the non-green NGOs and new requirements for cooperation between the NGOs with different scopes of interest: climate-oriented, environmental, energy-oriented, economic, infrastructure, etc.

At the same time, **the involvement of other sectoral (non environmental or climate-oriented) NGOs to the processes associated with climate change may pose additional challenges** for the operations of climate-oriented NGOs, provided the sectoral NGOs do not show proper levels of climate awareness or eco-responsibility.

The European Climate Pact highlighted the importance of an **inclusive process** of the EGD. Everyone could contribute to the joint effort of climate action through the forms of engagement designed by the EU<sup>6</sup>. Success will come to the NGOs who would manage to engage wide range of common citizens, also through mass membership. Association of environmental organizations into the intersectoral movement to achieve the EGD targets will make NGOs stronger. They will be able to better communicate, to coordinate the joint work, to monitor and impact the political decision-making in all nine key areas of the EGD.

We can anticipate the strengthening of cooperation between local authorities and NGOs on the level of cities in line of achieving the EGD targets, especially in the countries that actively support decentralization.

## 3.4. Prerequisites for efficient climate policy of the EaP countries under the EGD

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**The EGD will help increase the ambitiousness of climate policy and the priority of climate change aspects but it cannot provide on its own for the efficiency of national efforts** in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change in the EaP countries. The future climate policy of the EaP countries depends on whether certain preconditions are met that we believe are overarching for policy making and implementation.

Firstly, **national climate policies shall be made and implemented as a process**, rather than as a set of documents. The widely used planning approach in the EaP countries “to adopt and forget” undermines the consistency and efficiency in the climate policy implementation, even where such policy is available.

Secondly, climate policy will be more efficient only when **local level is involved, and the role of cities is increased**. Cities may be the drivers but also the impediments for climate policy. In the context of high urbanization, it is a critical factor for efficiency of climate action.

Thirdly, the success of climate policy will directly depend on the **engagement of the entire population and stakeholders** to all stages of the climate policy cycle. In particular, focus shall be made on the need for raising **social support** to climate issues. It will also require certain cooperation on the level of civil society that often represents competing interests (such as economic, social, and energy). In addition, the raising social demand for climate change is directly related to the need to build wide individual membership in civil society organizations (movements).

Finally, **the implementation of the technical assistance projects shall provide for local ownership**. It is directly related to climate policy as a process: certain documents of the national climate policy (such as the NDC) shall be developed and implemented within the process and in the settings of direct and efficient involvement of local stakeholders, especially governments, businesses, and civil society. The practice of “parachuting” the experts and studies will not ensure this sort of local support.

## Annex I. Sources used to map CSOs in area of climate policy

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