

REPORT OF UPES'S CONFERENCE

ENERGY LAW, ENVIRONMENT AND INVESTMENTS IN THE CONTEXT AND AFTER THE COVID-19 VIRUS

At the very beginning, Dr. Branislava Lepotić Kovačević, President of UPES, addressed the participants, thanking them for attending the conference, expressing her satisfaction that UPES is organizing an international conference for the third year in a row as well as emphasizing the importance of the conference as one of the ways to meet UPES's goals. She especially emphasized the challenges that UPES faced in organizing this conference, at times when the whole world is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why this conference was organized in the form of a webinar. She also referred to the importance of the topics covered by the conference and underlined as particularly important that when we talk about these topics, we are actually talking about ourselves.

The President of EFELA, Mr. Vicente Lopez-Ibor Mayor, expressed his satisfaction of addressing the participants of the annual UPES conference again this year, and wished that UPES continues successfully developing and achieving its goals in the field of energy law and field of energy in general, wherein it has EFELA's full support and assistance. He also pointed out his satisfaction with the choice of topics covered by the conference and said that it is now already apparent that energy law and climate change, the topic conference is, amongst others, dealing with, have a clear interaction and connection.

I Session – Energy law, energy consumers and environment in the context and after COVID - 19 virus

Moderator: UPES, Mrs. Iva Đinđić Ćosić, Head of International Legal Cooperation and Electricity Market Affairs Unit, JSC “Elektromreža Srbije“ Belgrade

The introductory speech in this session was given by the Deputy Director and Legal Counsel of the Energy Community Secretariat, Prof. Dirk Buschle who spoke about the development and goals of the Energy Community since its inception and then about the development of European energy law. This was followed by a presentation of the achievements of European energy law, which he presented through the sphere of *European energy law DNA*, after which he spoke about the impact of the Paris Agreement on the development of European energy law and its development in the framework of the European Green Deal. In the end, he spoke about the key challenges that the Energy Community is facing, and will face in the future, in the context of global and European aspirations to achieve the goals of the Green Deal.

Energy Law Consultant Mr. David Lockhart spoke in general about the role of prosumers in the energy market, the benefits of this concept, legislation and good practices in the

field, with special reference to net metering policies. Afterwards, he spoke about the regulations of the Republic of Serbia in the field and the obstacles in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia for the establishment of an efficient net metering system for prosumers. Finally, he discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the development of the concept of prosumers and their role in the energy market, as well as provided key elements of each model of prosumers' regulation.

Subsequently, Mr. Shaun Green from Volution Group UK gave a presentation on ventilation systems and other products developed by the Volution Group in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. He pointed out at the significance of an efficient ventilation system in buildings and apartments in conditions when a great number of people work from home due to the pandemic. In addition, he demonstrated the interdependence of air pollution, and the development of the COVID-19 and the importance of ventilation systems in the fight against the pandemic. Furthermore, he presented regulations and good practices in the UK with the aim of establishing effective ventilation systems in the context of the fight against the COVID-19. At the end of Mr. Green's presentation, Dr. Branislava Lepotić Kovačević emphasized the importance of this presentation for lawyers' understanding of the entire legal framework of energy law, which includes technical regulations and, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, pointing out at the importance of regulations in the field of ventilation systems.

Mrs. Mira Todorović Simeonides, Partner in the Rokas Law Firm in Athens, briefly presented the general importance of EU regulations in the field of electromobility, with particular focus on electromobility regulations of Greece. Moreover, she concisely presented relevant regulations in the context of encouraging electromobility in the EU and Greece, as well as identified advantages of electromobility and its regulatory and practical challenges and problems. She pointed out that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, this concept continues to develop and the demand on the market for electric vehicles continues to grow.

The concluding remarks of the first session were presented by Mr. Miloš Kuzman, Upstream Legal Advisor in NIS jsc Novi Sad, who briefly summarized the key messages of the presentations held in this session, stressed the importance of the interdependence of energy law and the fight against climate change and the need for an adequate response by energy law regulations in regard to this interdependence, with special reference to an adequate regulatory response from the countries in the region.

II Session – Energy law, investments and environment in the context and after covid-19 virus

Moderator: UPES, Vuk Stankovic, Head of Rokas International Law Firm, Belgrade

The introductory speech in this session was given by Mr. Christian Egenhofer, Senior Researcher and Head of the Energy and Climate program at the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS), who presented the EU Green Deal and EU policies and long-term EU strategies for achieving the goals of the Green Deal. He then spoke about the importance of the EU Green Deal for the Western Balkans states, with reference to the EU and other countries' efforts towards the realization of the Green Deal. In the end, he spoke about the significance of the Green Deal for the recovery of EU states from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and optimistically concluded that we have a long way to go to achieve the goals of the Green Deal, but that the same could be reached through joint efforts.

Dr. Rozeta Karova, Senior Energy Legal Expert in the Energy Community Secretariat, gave an overview of basic goals of the Green Deal and an outline of the EU energy sector, with particular reference to the processes of integration and unbundling within the energy sector in the context of energy transition. Mrs. Karova emphasized the importance of hydrogen for the energy transition in the context of the Green Deal, after which she pointed out that the necessary legislation needs to be adopted at the EU level to achieve the goals of the Green Deal. She presented the concept of the green agenda for the Western Balkans and spoke about its importance for the Western Balkans countries. Finally, she referred to the challenges and opportunities Energy Community faces in the process of achieving the goals of the Green Deal within Energy Community Member States.

In her presentation, Mrs. Ivone Rocha, Partner at Telles de Abreu Law Firm in Lisboa, presented the interdependence of energy law and climate change in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mrs. Rocha pointed out the shortcomings of the relationship of the mentioned interdependence up until now, which were shown during the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of the pandemic on this interdependence and the opportunities for improving it due to the shortcomings pointed out by the pandemic. After that, she presented her vision of further development of international energy principles and the need to engage all relevant participants in such development.

Mr. Aleksandar Kovačević, Consultant in the field of energy economics in Castle European UK, stressed the importance of investments in the energy sector towards achieving the goals of the Green Deal. Mr. Kovačević referred to several sectors in the field of energy in which it is necessary to invest in order to transform them, as well as presented the development of the Energy Community and its ability to respond to investment challenges. He then introduced the interdependence of both commercial and public investments and the rule of law in the Energy Community Member States and in some of the EU countries, as well as analyzed the need for new commercial investments in the energy sector of European countries.

Closing lecture - Impact of COVID - 19 to principles of the energy law

The closing lecture was given by Professor for Global Energy Law & Sustainability at the Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law and Policy at the University of Dundee, Dr. Raphael Heffron, who talked about energy law in the world of the forthcoming climate change and the current transition in the energy sector, as well as introduced basic principles of energy law. Furthermore, he presented the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the energy transition process and the good practices that need to be followed in order for the energy transition to be more successful. He pointed out that it is crucial for the upcoming energy transition to: a) be accelerated; b) to represent a just transition to a low-carbon economy; and c) lead to revolutionary changes in legislation and policies.

Concluding remarks of the second session and the closing lecture were given by Mrs. Aleksandra Petrović, Attorney at law at Moravcevic Vojnovic and partners in cooperation with Schönherr, who efficiently summarized the presentations held in this session, kindly thanked all panelists for providing useful information and stressed the importance of further development of energy law after the COVID – 19 pandemic.

The conference was officially closed by Dr. Branislava Lepotić Kovačević, President of UPES, who thanked all panelists, moderators, participants and sponsors who took part in organizing and conducting the conference and expressed her hope that UPES will continue to hold conferences dealing with up to date topics for energy law and other laws related to energy law.