



## ITALY: “SAVE THE DATE”

### World day of social justice

**20th February** - World Day of Social Justice to recognize the need to promote social justice, which includes efforts to tackle issues such as poverty, exclusion, gender equality, unemployment, human rights, and social protections. The 2020 theme is Closing the Inequalities Gap to Achieve Social Justice. Read more: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/social-justice-day>



### World wildlife day

**3rd March** - World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora and to recognize the important role of



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Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in ensuring that international trade does not threaten the survival of species. Read more: <https://www.wildlifeday.org/>

## Funding opportunities for grass-root CSOs, media and individuals (activists)

### 2nd Call for Proposals IPA Cross-border Programme Serbia - Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014-2020:

The overall objective of this Programme is the enhancement of socio-economic development in the cross-border area between the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, through the implementation of targeted and concrete

actions, based on comparative advantages of the Programme area and the joint, efficient use of resources. In order to achieve this objective, the Programme focuses on the following thematic Priorities: Promoting employment,



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labour mobility, social and cultural inclusion across the border. Protecting the environment, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management. Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage. Eligible Countries: Bosnia and

Herzegovina and Serbia  
Closing Date: 21st February 2020  
Theme: Improving sustainable environmental planning and promotion of biodiversity  
[https://www.euro-access.eu/calls/ipa\\_serbia-bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina](https://www.euro-access.eu/calls/ipa_serbia-bosnia_and_herzegovina)

## Spotlight on a particular grass-root initiative different for every issue

Western Balkans Civil Society Summit organized by Western Balkans Fund with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan is taking place at 27-29 of February 2020 in Tirana. This big event, which is happening for the first time, will have in focus all the civil society organizations which are giving a significant contribution on the regional cooperation. Read more: <http://westernbalkansfund.org/2020/02/17/western-balkans-civil-society-summit-27-29-february>



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## MONENEGRO: NEW METHODOLOGY IN EU ACCESSION PROCESS



The new methodology implies that the negotiations will be organized within six areas, namely clusters, which will cover all the former 35 chapters. According to the new methodology, clusters, or groups of chapters, are to be opened at the same time, or when certain conditions are fulfilled - what it calls

"benchmarks" for clusters, as well as a certain deadline for closing the chapters. Thus, when the initial benchmarks for a multi-chapter cluster are defined and met, the candidate countries will be asked to close the chapters consisting of that cluster within a relatively short time. Thus, the commitment of states, rapid adoption of reforms and substantive implementation are expected.



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## **The new methodology envisages six clusters:**

- 1) Fundamental or fundamental rights, which include the rule of law, the judiciary and democratization;
- 2) The internal market and free movement of goods, capital and labor and the like;
- 3) Competitiveness and inclusive growth within which social policy, health, science and media;
- 4) Green plan and sustainable connectivity, i.e. areas from transport to ecology;

5) Resources, agriculture and cohesion, that is, rural development, food security and regional cooperation;

6) Foreign and security policy.

The clusters were organized in accordance with the proposal of France but also with the requests of individual Member States who complained that they had no control over the enlargement process. They will now have greater control over the process, the ability to monitor, and they will be the ones that will be able to suspend or reverse negotiations. However, the new methodology will not apply to Serbia and Montenegro unless the two



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countries wish to incorporate the new methodology into their negotiations.

A novelty in the methodology is the Reversibility Process - if a chapter is closed and the candidate country, for example, lowers the standards set, there is a reversibility mechanism, that is, the chapter may be reopened. This is also a request from France. The draft methodology has been adopted by the European Commission and is expected to be adopted at the Member States Summit in March.

## INDOOR AIR MONITORING

Green Home has started measuring air quality in three households in Municipality of Pljevlja, one of which uses coal, the other wood and the other electricity for heating purposes. Air quality will be measured for two months. For

the first time, we will obtain results on the indoor air quality of households using different energy sources, and compare them. Often, indoor air pollution is higher than outdoor pollution, especially when coal is used as an



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energy source in households. For this reason, through such measurements, Green Home wants to point to possible internal pollution, as well as differences in the air quality in homes that use different energy sources for heating, in order for citizens to opt for more adequate and healthier ways of heating. Measurements are made using an AirVisual Pro sensor from the Swiss company IQAir, a leading specialist in indoor air quality measurement, with over 55 years of experience. AirVisual Pro is a smart monitor that combines high-precision laser technology with artificial intelligence, and uses

US EPA national air quality standards to calculate parameters. This real-time device provides accurate information on concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> particles, temperature and humidity, which are often neglected factors that greatly affect the quality of the air. It also allows direct comparison of indoor and outdoor quality through measured concentrations from the nearest public metering station.



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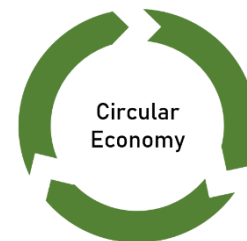




## NORTH MACEDONIA: INVESTING IN YOUNG INNOVATORS IS A PATH TO A SUSTAINABLE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

During February, 2020, the Fund for Innovation and Technological Development (FITR) has organized a consultative debate on the new mechanism for financial support of young innovators. FITR has prepared a "Rulebook on Financial Support of Scientific and Technological Excellence and Entrepreneurship for Students and Youth" - a draft document aimed at establishing the rules under which financial and technical assistance will be provided to talented children and their mentors.

Representatives of several educational institutions and civic associations participating in the debate assessed this step as positive, supplementing it with their own suggestions and comments that will be taken in finalizing the rulebook.



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The purpose of establishing the new measure, as reported by FITR, is to open additional

opportunities for financing young innovators, which will cover all phases, from identifying their potential and opportunities, preparation for participation in international competitions and financial support. This measure is intended for all educational institutions and associations that implement activities to support talented students or work on the development of entrepreneurial skills among young people.

## **THE BAN ON IMPORT AND EXPORT OF COMBUSTIBLE WASTE BETWEEN MACEDONIA AND BULGARIA ENTERS INTO FORCE**

On February 24, 2020 the ban on import and export of combustible waste between Bulgaria

and Macedonia on entered into force. This is in accordance with the amendments to the law on



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waste management, which was adopted by summary procedure in the parliament in North Macedonia, before it was dissolved. It bans the

import of waste, which is used in our country as a source of energy.



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Macedonia and Bulgaria have pledged that from February 24, such waste will not pass from Bulgaria to the country, nor from Macedonia to Bulgaria. Regarding the issue of waste recycling, further consideration will be given and for now things will remain as before.



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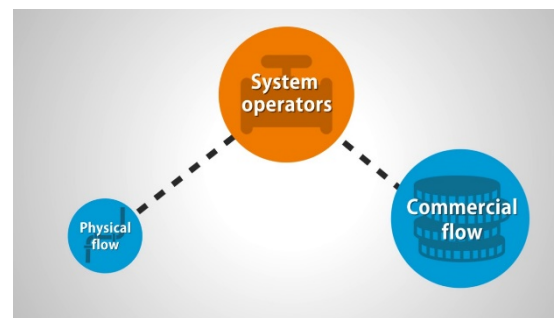




## HOW ARE WE GETTING ON WITH THE LIBERALISATION OF THE ENERGY MARKET?

There are about 18 thousand companies (consumers) in the country, registered by measuring points that are supplied with electricity on the free electricity market. The Energy Regulatory Commission emphasizes that the number of companies in the liberalized electricity market may be slightly lower because one company can be connected to several measuring points. What is important for the regulator, as they say, is that they have not received significant complaints regarding the electricity supply and the mutual relations

between the electricity suppliers and the companies.



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According to the Energy and Water Services Regulatory Commission, the new model of a universal supplier has proved to be functioning well, providing stability and security in the delivery of electricity. Consumers so far have no objections. "In the period from July 1, 2019, when the universal supplier EVN HOME DOO Skopje started performing the energy activity, until today, there are no open questions regarding the electricity supply", say from ERC. EVN was selected as the most favorable bidder in the public bidding and as a universal supplier in the regulated market it works according to a fixed margin defined by the tender procedure in the next 5 years. The

universal electricity supplier EVN Home supplies electricity to customers who have not chosen a supplier in the liberalized market. Specifically, EVN Home serves all households and businesses with less than 50 employees and a total annual income of less than 2 million euros that have not selected their supplier. According to the ERC, not only the free market, but the energy sector as a whole has no major problems this season. They say that in the field of electricity, open questions arise in the networks due to the overload of some elements. However, in order to avoid such situations in the future or to minimize them, the authorities have taken the initiative and a draft decision is



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currently being prepared, which will provide for a mandatory indication in the process of obtaining the building permit, to state exactly what type of energy each new building will use for heating.

"The key goal is to use the resources we have as a state in the most efficient and economical way to solve the heating of the citizens." For example: where there is an organized heating system, the new buildings should be connected to it, and if the investor shows that there is a more efficient system to solve the heating problem, it is not disputable to implement that solution. In this way, companies in the energy

sector will be able to properly plan future investments, "said the Energy Regulatory Commission.

In accordance with the Law on Energy, consumers are obliged to choose a supplier on the open market within 90 days, a period after which the universal supplier (EVN Home doo) will no longer have the opportunity to supply them with electricity.

For now, it is too early to predict what the price will be or whether there will be any price changes in relation to the new price of electricity. The companies in the field of energy from the country in the next period should



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submit the requests for determining the price by May 30 at the latest this year. After that, the Energy Regulatory Commission will approach a detailed analysis and check of the overall costs, after which the decision on the price of electricity will be determined and made by June 30 this year.



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## SERBIA: FIGHT AGAINST POLLUTED AIR IN SERBIA. DOES EU ACCESSION PROCESS CAN HELP?

Through campaign launched in Serbia in 2019, named “EU for you”, EU Delegation in Serbia organized panel debate with Center for European Politics (CEP) in EU info center in Belgrade. Taking into account recent problem with polluted air in Serbia, and wider in WB region, the panel was organized to discuss issues related to the financing of environmental protection in the context of increasing air quality, rights and obligations of Serbia as a member of the Energy Community, as well as expectations regarding the opening of Chapter

27 under the negotiation process with the EU, concerning the environment. Prof. Andjelka Mihajlov, honorably president of Environmental Ambassadors for Sustainable Development was one of the panelist, in the capacity of ENV.net project. She focused on research EASD performs in the frame of ENV.net project, together with Media Archive “Ebart”, related to frequency of the appearance of words “the environment” and “the ecology” in written media. It is evidenced that we are still in decade minimum and still environmental



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protection issues are not of primary interest among, neither for decision makers, nor for citizens. Prof. Mihajlov also discussed about Shadow report EASD prepared to the Voluntary national review for Serbia, in 2019. This is report on SDGs implementation where environmental protection is presented in satisfied way. Other panelists were from EUD, civil society organizations and the Ministry of environmental protection of the Republic of Serbia and Serbian environmental protection agency (SEPA).



EUD representatives addressed problem to the energy sector, necessity to establish monitoring and further improvements in order to become more environmental friendly to the citizens. They focused on a Green Deal and zero emission to 2050 in EU countries, what is very important to children and their safety and



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healthy future. The fact is that there were some cities in EU with high air pollution in the past. But they recognized problem and found sustainable solutions that can be replicated in other countries. People and decision makers have to become aware that diseases caused by air pollution cost one society more than measures against climate change and pollution. There are also business interested to participate to combat climate change and pollutions. What is improved in Serbia in last couple of years relates to monitoring system of air quality.

What is evidenced in Serbia, the main air pollutants are power plants, traffic and

individual furnaces. Strategy for air protection is ongoing process in Serbia, as well as DSIPs related to air quality and air protection.

Civil society organizations discussed about right on information regarding air quality. Health sector is not included environmental protection issues, there is no evidence about implementation of measures, strategies and other documents in the field of environment and health. It is the fact that Law on air was adopted in 2009 consisted of measures and instruments. In 2019 we are faced with enormous air pollution. What was implemented and what was done during 10 years in between, who is



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responsible for registered air pollution, either decision makers, or policy implementers?

Despite the fact Serbia submitted Negotiation position for Chapter 27 to the EC, there is no time to wait for the opening of Chapter and should not wait to become EU membership to start intensive work especially in the field of air pollution.



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## TURKEY: “CANCEL THE EIA DECISION OF ISTANBUL CHANNEL PROJECT”

TEMA filed a law case to cancel the EIA decision of Istanbul Channel Project

The Istanbul Channel is a waterway project between Black Sea and Marmara Sea. The project is to build an artificial channel parallel to Bosphorus. TEMA and other stakeholders such as WWF Turkey, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality have been raising up the threats that the Project exposes since 2014. Despite the opposition, the Ministry of Transportation who owns the project started the environmental impact assessment in 2018. TEMA examined the EIA report and presented the issues

identified to the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization in December 2019 at the EIA meeting in Ankara. TEMA Scientific Committee of 9 people and 5 TEMA representatives gathered to make a deeper investigation of the impacts of the project on 7th February. The outputs of the meeting were used on the law case of EIA cancellation. The arguments of TEMA why the EIA decision should be canceled are as follows:

- The Istanbul Channel Project is not evaluated in the scope of Strategic Environmental Assessment



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- It is against the international conventions
  - The project threatens the ground water resources of the city
  - The project will cause the loss of biodiversity
- TEMA will conduct a communication campaign to raise awareness about the impacts of the project in coming months.



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## WATER DIALOGUE MEETINGS IN ANKARA

TEMA conducted a series of Water Dialogue Meetings for the dates of 20 and 21 February in Ankara. The activities were conducted as part of the EU funded Participatory River Basin Management Project which aims to increase capacity of NGOs about River Basin Management approach and to increase the dialogue between the public authorities and civil society. The representatives of TEMA and the project partners (Friends of the Earth Croatia and European Environment Bureau EEB) visited the public institutions such as State Water Affairs, Presidential Office of



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Strategy and Budget, GD of Combatting Desertification, GD of Water Management on 20th February. Project partners shared their experiences in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and answered the questions by the public officials. On the second day of the meeting series, TEMA foundation

conducted a large meeting where over 70 civil society representatives attended. Project partners shared the experiences about the participatory mechanisms while local NGO representatives from Turkey presented their works on water issues in their locales.

## **TEMA FILED A LAWSUIT TO CANCEL THE AMENDMENT OF THE REGULATION OF WASTE LANDFILLS**

The regulation of the waste landfills was amended as to grant exemptions to coal plants which don't have regular ash depots. TEMA filed a lawsuit to cancel the amendment. Ash depots which are not designed and built according to criteria regulated by the law, threaten the soil and water resources



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around the plants therefore regular landfill criteria and control is essential for the health of environment and communities. Following the President's veto of the exemption regarding the coal plants without environmental investments, coal plant operators without ash depots pushed the policy makers for this new regulation.

## ENV.NET SUB-GRANTEES FOR 2020 ANNOUNCED

The winners of “the Local Problems Local Solutions: Environmental Participation for Turkey” Sub-grant Programme were announced on 24th February. The programme received 43 applications from 17 provinces. Following the administrative check, 40 applications were evaluated by the jury which is composed of TEMA's staff from different departments. The winners are:

- Sustainable Industry and Circular Economy Campaign, Ondokuz Mayıs University Environmental Problems Research Center, Samsun
- Erzurum is onboard for the Climate Action Plan, Atatürk University Faculty of Engineering, Erzurum
- Raising Climate advocates!, Sosyal İklim Derneği, İzmir



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## TEMA'S PRELIMINARY VISIT TO AKADEMI RECYCLING CO.

Akademi Co. is a recycling firm with a large facility in İstanbul. TEMA representatives met with the representatives of the firm and were briefed about the operations as well as the overall situation of waste collection and recycling in Turkey on 10th February. The company representatives introduced their machinery for recycling of electrical appliances. The meeting hall of the company is refurbished using the obsolete aircraft seats to showcase a re-use options.

The firm is in operation since 2009 and one of the leading companies in the recycling sector. It is a preliminary visit before a comprehensive site visit with larger TEMA Staff in coming months.



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## ALBANIA

One of the biggest scientific petitions on the global freshwater ecology calls for stopping the Vjosa River hydropower projects in Albania ++ Scientists urge the Albanian government to respect the scientific standards of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the project Kalivaç.

### **Tirana, 15.2.2020**

At an extraordinary press conference in Tirana, Albanian scientists supported by colleagues from Austria and Germany raised their voices for Vjosa and especially against the



continuation of the process for the Kalivaç dam project. Their stance was supported by a large number of scientists: 776 scientists from 46 countries signed a petition to stop the construction of the dam on the Vjosa River as well as to follow international standards in this



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regard. Among them are some of the most famous scientists in the world. This is one of the largest science petitions in freshwater ecology, globally. Unimaginably, the petition was signed by 129 Albanian experts, and this has never happened before in the modern history of the country. *Information Source & Article:* <https://mjedisot.info/articles.php?id=334>



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