

Energy storage policy updates north macedonia

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The Africa programme analyses the geopolitics of the Africa-Europe relationship. In particular, the programme delves into relations between the African Union and the European Union to find creative foreign policy tools and strategies. It also focuses on two regions that are particularly relevant for Europe: the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

The Asia programme seeks to help Europe recalibrate its relationship with China and its Asian partners. The programme analyses China's domestic situation, its role in the region, and its increasing global influence. It also places a renewed emphasis on fostering Europe's relationships with the Indo-Pacific, especially India and Japan.

The European Power programme is focused on helping Europeans develop sustainable policy solutions to the issues affecting the European Union's capacity to act with unity on the global scene. This includes analysing the path forward for enlargement, the energy transition, and European support for Ukraine.

The Middle East and North Africa programme seeks to support a coherent European agenda in pursuit of regional interests. The programme works with European and regional governments, local voices, and civil society to advance channels of dialogue as well as providing direct policy prescriptions to secure conflict de-escalation, regional stabilisation, and democratic transition.

The US programme helps Europeans create policy responses to developments in US domestic politics and foreign policy. The programme seeks to strengthen transatlantic relations by exploring the obstacles to a more balanced partnership and developing ideas to overcome them.

The Wider Europe programme aims to help the European Union defend its interests and values in the Western Balkans, Turkey, Russia, and eastern Europe, as well as the South Caucasus and central Asia. The programme also supports EU decision-makers work on a unified and coherent policy to address the challenges resulting from Russia's full scale-invasion of Ukraine.

An energy crisis looms in the Western Balkans. As EU leaders scramble to maintain their energy supplies for

the coming winter, at least two Western Balkans states – North Macedonia and Kosovo – will declare an energy emergency in August, in anticipation of shortages during colder months.

The covid-19 pandemic caused a significant economic shock in the Western Balkans. According to the World Bank, the GDP of countries in the region contracted by 3.2 per cent in 2020, before rebounding to 7.4 per cent growth in 2021. However, the global surge in energy prices is threatening the region with a new range of economic challenges. This means that policymakers working on the European Commission’s Green Agenda for the Western Balkans will need to reconcile rising prices and energy security with the goal of environmental protection. This will require strong and coordinated action from governments in the region, along with a great deal of support from the European Union.

For Western Balkans states to become energy secure, they will need to pivot to the EU and adhere to the union’s regulations and policies. This is especially important with regard to the green agenda, a central part of which is the transition to renewable energy.

Western Balkans countries should also diversify their energy production and supply chains. To achieve this, they should work with the EU to formulate innovative and country-specific approaches to the green transition – backed by both political will and institutional support. In fact, by signing the Sofia Declaration, they have already committed to doing so.

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