

National SD Strategy processes in Eastern and Southern EU in the context of current socio-economic and environmental challenges

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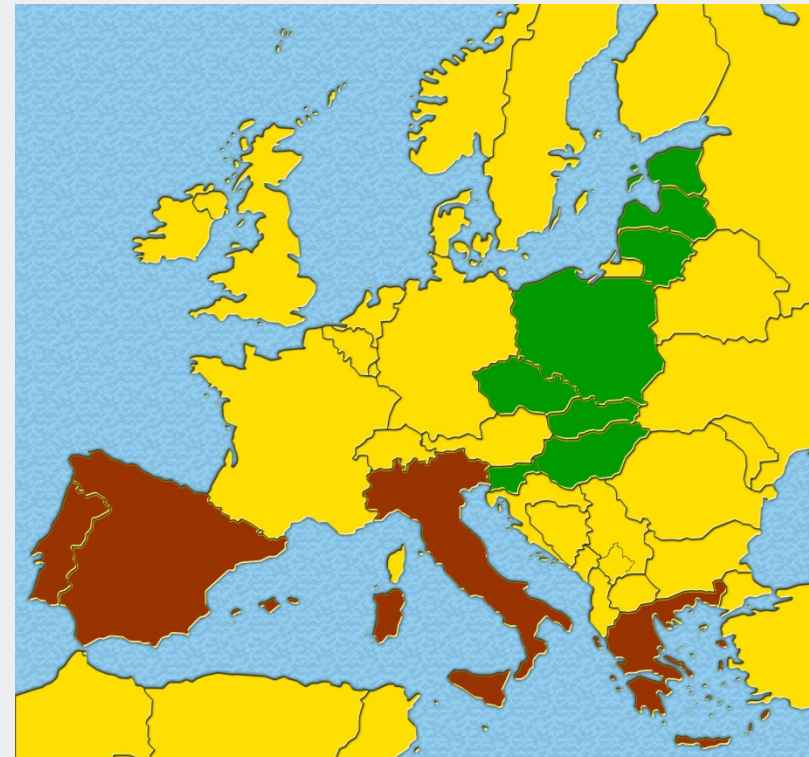
1. Selected countries, method and overview

CEE countries (CZ, EE, HU, LV, LT, PL, SK, SI): NSDSs developments in light of 10-years EU accession

Southern EU Member States (EL, ES, IT, PT): socio-economic and environmental challenges after the crises

Method:

- Updated ESDN country profiles
- Overview of 5 main Eurostat indicators
- **10 telephone interviews** with national SD experts based on a semi-structured questionnaire



Overview on socio-economic challenges ...

Real GDP per capita

- In Southern EU crises had strong effects
- All CEE countries increased their GDP between 2004 and 2013

Unemployment rate

- High in the Southern EU, with **high youth unemployment**
- The majority of CEE countries have unemployment close to EU average

Inequality of income distribution

- Spain and Greece had the highest income inequality across the EU in 2012
- Varies among CEE countries, but all of them have decreased it

... and on environmental challenges

GHG Emissions dropped in the majority of countries

- In all four southern European countries GHG Emissions dropped sharply mainly because of the economic crisis
- The majority of CEE countries reduced their GHG emissions

Share of renewable energy is increasing

- Portugal, Estonia and Latvia reached a share of approximately 25%
- All CEE countries increased the share of renewable energy: varying from 10% to 40%

2. Basic info on NSDS processes

Adoption of NSDS:

Country	NSDS current version	Number of revisions	Year of adoption and revisions
Czech Republic	2010	1	2004, 2010
Estonia	2005	0	2005
Greece	2002	0	2002
Hungary	2013	1	2007, 2013
Italy	2002	0	2002
Latvia	2010	1	2002, 2010
Lithuania	2011	2	2003, 2009, 2011
Poland	2000	0	2000
Portugal	2007	0	2007
Slovakia	2005	1	2001, 2005
Slovenia	2005	0	2005
Spain	2007	0	2007

Revisions of NSDSs:

- Five CEE countries have already revised their strategies
→ six plan revisions in 2015
- No revisions in Southern countries so far

3. EU influence on NSDS processes



- **EU SD policy framework** has influence on NSDS processes in terms of i.e. guidance, definition of objectives, awareness, etc.
- **EU SDS** is not a major steering document, but often serves as justification for NSDS processes
- In CEEs, **Europe 2020 strategy** is perceived as having an indirect influence on NSDS processes. In Southern countries, it appears to have a stronger influence
- **EU Cohesion Funds** are often linked to SD policies

4. Challenges addressed by SD policies (1)

CHALLENGES	SD MEASURES
Public Debt	EL: Raised emphasis on economic pillar of SD and structural reforms
High Unemployment	LV: Vocational training and monitoring of unemployed people
Demographic Change	SI: Promotion of intergenerational exchange
Income Inequality	LV: Tax exemptions for minimum income salaries and young families

4. Challenges addressed by SD policies (2)

CHALLENGES	SD MEASURES
GHG Emissions	ES: Promotion of biofuels
Biodiversity Loss	EL: National Strategy for biodiversity
Water Management	SI: Investments proposed by cohesion policy
Waste Management	LT: NSDS guides the National Waste Management Plan

5. Role of NSDS in steering different policies

- **Umbrella strategy or long-term guiding tool** for national sectoral strategies and programmes
- **Consensual framework , coordinating and advisory tool** for the preparation of sectoral policies
- **Awareness raising tool** for society and politics
- NSDS takes care of the **commitments** with EU and internationally

6. Reflections (1)

- EU SD framework has influence on NSDS processes in terms of i.e. guidance, awareness, support for defining objectives:
 - *Should we link the EU SD framework with EU cohesion funds and NSDSs objectives?*
- Common challenges of selected countries: unemployment, demographic change, public debt, GHG emissions, biodiversity loss
 - *How to give national challenges an 'SD approach and solution'?*

6. Reflections (2)

- NSDS processes address challenges through long-term objectives and sectoral policies develop medium-term measures
 - *Consider a systemic approach to guarantee coherence of NSDS*
- Role of NSDSs: steering different policies, as tools for awareness raising and strategic decision making, advising for other policies
 - *Consider checking national policies against SD objectives (i.e. impact assessment)*

THANK YOU!!