



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH
DIRECTORATE A
DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

FACTSHEET

SLOVAKIA

Chapter 14 - Energy

1. The acquis ¹

The energy acquis represents the body of all energy related EU law, regulations and policies. Implementing the acquis requires not only adequate legislation but also properly functioning institutions (for example a regulatory body, as required in the electricity and gas directives, a nuclear safety authority etc.).

In view of the energy acquis, candidate countries need notably to:

- decide on an overall energy policy with clear timetables for restructuring the sector;
- prepare for the internal energy market (the Gas and Electricity directives; the Directive on electricity produced from renewable energy sources);
- improve energy networks in order to create a real European market;
- prepare for crisis situations, particularly through the constitution of 90 days of oil stocks;
- address the social, regional and environmental consequences of the restructuring of mines;
- waste less energy and increase the use of renewable energies such as wind, hydro, solar and biomass in their energy balance;
- improve the safety of nuclear power plants in order to ensure that electricity is produced according to a high level of nuclear safety;
- ensure that nuclear waste is handled in a responsible manner; and prepare for the implementation of Euratom Safeguards on nuclear materials.

Candidate countries have made considerable progress in the last few years and the above-mentioned issues are applicable to them in varying degrees. However, more is necessary, and this will evidently require large amounts of investment funding. Although the EU will continue to assist with pre-accession aid, the bulk will have to be financed by candidate countries themselves. Private investments have an important role to play in this context and require a stable investment climate.

¹ Information largely drawn from the European Commission, DG Enlargement
<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/chapters/index.htm>

As regards the issue of nuclear energy, the European Union has repeatedly emphasised the importance of a high level of nuclear safety in candidate countries. In June 2001, the Council of the European Union took note of a [Report on Nuclear Safety in the Context of Enlargement](#). This Report contains recommendations to all candidate countries to continue their national safety improvement programmes, including the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, and regarding the safety of their research reactors.

All candidate countries have responded to these recommendations. During the first half of 2002, a special Peer Review on nuclear safety assessed the progress made by candidate countries in implementing all recommendations. This exercise under the auspices of the Council resulted in a [Status Report](#), which was published in June 2002. It comes to the general conclusion that all candidate countries are clearly committed to fulfil the recommendations. The EU has insisted on the early closure of certain types of nuclear power units.

2. The negotiations

The chapter has been closed with ten countries and provisionally closed with Bulgaria, while it remains open with Romania. Generally, in the energy chapter, negotiations concentrate, depending on the country concerned, on the constitution of emergency oil stocks, the internal energy market (gas and electricity directives) and nuclear safety.

Transitional arrangements have been granted to all the countries which have closed the chapter so far, except Hungary, allowing them longer periods in which to build oil stocks up to the required level. The Czech Republic has been granted a transitional period up to the end of 2004 to implement the Gas Directive and Estonia has been allowed until the end of 2008 to implement the Electricity Directive.

Slovakia has committed itself to closing the two units of the Bohunice V-1 Nuclear Power Plant by 2006 and 2008 respectively. At the Copenhagen European Council, it was decided to give Slovakia € 90 million in the period 2004-2006 to support its efforts. The Union acknowledged that the decommissioning process will have to continue beyond 2006 and that this effort represents a significant financial burden for Slovakia. Decisions on the continuation of EU assistance in this field after 2006 will take account of this situation.

Chapter opened first half of 2001

Status closed in December 2002 (provisionally closed in second half of 2001)

Transitional periods:

- build up of oil stocks to required level, until the end of 2008.

3. Position of the European Parliament

In its resolution of 4 October 2000¹, the European Parliament supports the agreement reached with the European Commission to shut down the two reactor units of the Bohunice nuclear power plant in 2006 and 2008 respectively and supports the allocation of financial resources from the Union to implement these plans.

¹ Resolution on the state of negotiations with Slovakia, § 14: [A5-0244/2000](#)

In its resolution of 5 September 2001¹, the European Parliament calls on Slovakia to accelerate the preparations for the closing down and decommissioning of reactors 1 and 2 at the Bohunice V-1 nuclear power station and to actively pursue the upgrading plan for Bohunice V-2 and the remaining upgrading safety measures scheduled for Mochovce units 1 and 2.

In its resolution of 20 November 2002², Parliament looks to Slovakia to fulfil its undertaking, set out in the last progress report, to close blocks 1 and 2 of the power station at Bohunice.

4. Latest Assessment by the European Commission³

In its 1997 Opinion, the Commission concluded that, Slovakia needed to step up its efforts in order to comply with most of the EC energy legislation in the coming years. In particular, matters such as the adjustment of monopolies, access to networks, energy pricing, emergency preparedness -including the building-up of mandatory oil stocks-, state interventions in the solid fuel sector, and the development of energy efficiency and fuel quality standards needed attention. The Commission further pointed out that, although no major difficulties were foreseen regarding compliance with Euratom provisions, nuclear safety required particular attention. Safety standards should be tackled appropriately and realistic programmes implemented quickly. Furthermore, longer term solutions for waste need attention.

Since the Opinion, steady progress has been made, notably with regard to oil stocks, the internal energy market, particularly the electricity and gas sectors, nuclear issues, the gradual development of administrative capacity and, to a lesser extent, the improvement of energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy. Overall, Slovakia has achieved a good level of alignment with EC requirements in this field, as regards both legislative alignment and administrative preparations.

Negotiations on this chapter have been provisionally closed. Slovakia has been granted a transitional arrangement for the building-up of oil stocks (until 31 December 2008). Slovakia is generally meeting the commitments it has made in the accession negotiations in this field.

In order to complete preparations for membership, Slovakia's efforts now need to focus on ensuring full and timely implementation of legislation in this area, in particular with regard to the internal energy market (gas and electricity), and on strengthening the administrative capacity of the established bodies (in particular the energy regulator and the nuclear safety authority). Slovakia needs to take further measures for the progressive building up of oil stocks. Continued attention will need to be paid to state interventions in favour of the solid fuels sector and the repercussions on the electricity market. With respect to the Bohunice International Decommissioning Support Fund, Slovakia should further refine its project pipeline to ensure satisfactory projects for the decommissioning of the Bohunice V-1 reactors.

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¹ Resolution on the state of negotiations with Slovakia, § 36: [A5-0256/2001](#)

² Resolution on the progress of the candidate countries towards accession, § 119: [A5-0371/2002](#)

³ European Commission, Regular Report on Slovakia 2002, p.87:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/sk_en.pdf