

UNECE AIR CONVENTION

Gothenburg Protocol Review

Thematic session - EB December 2022

Responses to the questionnaire with guiding questions to facilitate discussions on barriers and solutions during the thematic session

Target group questionnaire

Questionnaire was circulated on 17 October 2022 to 18 countries

➤ **12 EECCA countries**

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

➤ **5 Western Balkan countries**

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

➤ **Türkiye**

Mixed profile

➤ 3 countries: not Party to the Convention

➤ 7 countries: Party to the Convention and EU candidate

➤ 2 countries: Party to the Convention and potential EU candidate

➤ 6 countries: Party to the Convention (one CEPA with EU, other agreements ...)

Received responses questionnaire

Received responses to the Questionnaire

- **8 responses received, 1 response forthcoming**
 - 3 from Western Balkan countries: North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
 - 5 from EECCA countries: Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russian F, Uzbekistan
 - 1 from Türkiye
- **Profile of respondents**
 - 1 from country not a Party the Convention
 - 5 from countries Party to the Convention and EU candidate
 - 1 from country Party to the Convention and potential EU candidate
 - 2 from countries Party to the Convention (one with CEPA)
- **Compilation responses: publication forthcoming (on those given consent)**

List of questions

List of guiding questions

➤ Two main blocks

- Questions on amended Gothenburg Protocol
- Questions on possible future

➤ Questions on amended Gothenburg Protocol

- Progress? Challenges? By when is ratification expected/feasible?
- Main barriers? What support helped/is needed? Other flexibilities needed?
- Is the amended GP considered a useful instrument? An asset? Pros/cons?

➤ Questions on possible future

- Preferences for next steps? Status quo? Revision of amended GP? Other? Which?
- Technical annexes: mandatory? Restructured? Separate sections for EECCA/WB/TR?
- Which policy targets are feasible for 2030, 2035, 2040

Some of the responses shared

Responses to questions on amended Gothenburg Protocol

➤ **Progress? Challenges? By when is ratification expected/feasible**

- significant progress reported (EI, ER, PAMs, analysis, monitoring, legislation, ...)
- challenges: high PM/NO₂ concentrations (cities), setting ERCs, road transport (import vehicles), domestic heating, energy (lignite use), agriculture, diversity sectors / regions
- ratification: earliest by 2025 (1); by 2035-2040 (2); not a priority (1)

➤ **Main barriers?**

- financial barriers (economic situation, low incomes, high abatement costs, ...)
- lack of capacity for preparing EI, ERC, modelling; turn over staff ...
- complexity of AGP; retrofitting, high variety in technologies, local conditions ...
- other priorities than AQ, lack of political will for AQ

Some of the responses shared

Responses to questions on amended Gothenburg Protocol

- **What support (other than financial) helped/is needed?**
 - EU association agreements (commitments in exchange for benefits, assistance, ...)
 - capacity building projects (bilateral, international, TAIEX, EU, TFEIP workshops, ...)
 - expert missions, hands on training, technical assistance of international experts
 - e-learning course, webinars, TF meetings, EMEP GB, info exchanges, dialogues, ...

- **Other flexibilities needed?**
 - several respondents expressed a need for additional flexibilities
 - ratification sector by sector
 - update of timeline flexibilities

Some of the responses shared

Responses to questions on amended Gothenburg Protocol

➤ Is the amended GP considered a useful instrument? An asset? Pros/cons?

→ Pro:

- protocol as one single document bundling all requirements
- protocol as mandatory instrument attracts political attention, brings pressure
- for EU candidates: requirements in line with EU legislation

→ Con:

- protocol is too complex (financial / human resources limited); mandatory nature
- protocol lacks comparable support (unlike other international agreements)
- missing: various mechanisms (financial, technical, political) to support implem;
intensified international dialogue, high level sessions
- protocol is under-promoted in political circles (lack of awareness of importance)

→ Asset:

- as one single document a useful reference/benchmark; important under LRTAP
- supporting guidance doc's, methodologies, science, EI preparation, exchanges ...
- for EU candidates: main driver is AA (ratification as commitment)

Some of the responses shared

Responses to questions on possible future

- **Preferences for next steps? Status quo? Revision of amended GP? Other? Which?**
 - by several: preference to continue with AGP (in current or revised/restructured form); with due account of barriers; step by step transition towards ratification
 - no preference expressed for a new legal instrument / approach
 - potential revision should be realistic; concern about potentially further increasing ambition
 - useful: new funding instrument; hybrid approach (AGP + voluntary instrument)
 - further focus on awareness raising and capacity building is considered useful/necessary, extending to TR
 - initial focus on implementation: considered useful by some

Some of the responses shared

Responses to questions on possible future

- **Technical annexes: mandatory? Restructured? Separate sections for EECCA/WB/TR?**
 - mandatory vs voluntary: mixed response (also, mandatory but less stringent)
 - broad preference for separate sections for EECCA/WB/TR
 - some preference for separate ratification of individual annexes

- **Which policy targets are feasible for 2030, 2035, 2040?**
 - AGP feasible in the LT (by 2035?), conditional (with support, flexibilities, ...)
 - low quality of data and lack of capacities for emission projecting prevent defining realistic expectations and targets for future period up to 2040
 - significant emission reductions achievable by 2030

Further consideration of responses

Consideration of responses post-review

- Responses are very informative and provide further useful insights
- The responses show that current non-parties have made progress (to varying degrees), but still have needs and face barriers - no one fit solution (?)
- Responses should be considered when deliberating next steps following the review of the amended GP
- A warm call to those countries that have not yet responded to the questionnaire to consider doing so by January 2023
- A proposal to organize a follow up informal session in 2023 dedicated to non-Parties to discuss the options document of new ad hoc group of experts (potentially during EB43) and to continue the discussion with these countries