

Janez Kopac the director of the Energy Community (EnC) Secretariat pointed out that the price of electricity for industrial consumers in Serbia is approximately on the level with the EU countries. Therefore, industrial consumers subsidize residential consumers and lose competitiveness on the global market. During his visit to Serbia, Kopac said that the price of electricity for residential consumers must be increased, while subsidies for vulnerable consumers must be implemented only for those who really need them.

He said that Serbia has to gradually introduce carbon emissions tax in the price of electricity, which should be one of the measures presented to state-owned power utility EPS. According to him, Serbia is regional leader in the electricity sector, but is severely lagging in the gas sector, adding that the infringement procedure against Srbijagas for failure to unbundle its operations is the oldest ongoing procedure in the Energy Community, dating back to 2013. He sees subsidies for coal-based electricity generation as a huge problem, because all countries are phasing them out, but in Serbia they are higher than the subsidies for renewable energy, adding that the country failed to achieve the mandatory target of 27 % of renewable energy in total consumption (currently it is at 21 %). This is mostly the result of low investments in wind and solar energy due to unfavorable feed-in tariffs.

The greatest environmental issue is the emission of SO₂, which are six times higher than allowed by Serbian standard, and a dozen times higher than EU standards. He welcomed the intent to close some of the coal-fired thermal power plants, but the largest polluters TENT and TPP Kostolac remain in operation.