

Concept note and Programme

Virtual Launch Renewable Readiness Assessment (RRA) Albania

March 24, 2021 (13:00 – 14:30 CET)

Albania has made significant economic progress during the past three decades, moving from a low-income economy to a middle-income country in Europe. The real annual GDP growth rate in 2018 was reported at 4.15%, which is one of the highest in the South East Europe (SEE) region. Albania ranks also one of the highest renewable energy shares in the energy mix among the countries in SEE. The country is endowed with valuable natural resources, including one of the greatest numbers of sunshine hours per year in Europe, presenting significant potential for development of solar photovoltaic for power generation and solar thermal for heating purposes. However, currently its vulnerability to the climate change in combination with the strong domination of hydropower in the electricity production, lead to significant fluctuations and uncertainty in domestically produced electricity.

Energy security, energy sector sustainability and ensuring energy supply at cost-competitive prices are some of the key challenges the country will have to address in the near term. Due to domestic energy production not being able to meet the growing demand, Albania is on average a net energy importer. Thus, place a considerable weight on economic growth and trade deficit, especially in drought-stricken years. Ensuring cost competitive security of energy supply in Albania can be achieved with an increase in the renewable energy share and especially with a diversification of the country's electricity sector, which is currently 95% hydro-based. In the recent years, the Albanian Government has taken commendable steps for the promotion of non-hydro renewable energy use, and the Renewables Readiness Assessment (RRA) aims to further support the country on this path. The RRA report calls for an accelerated diversification of the electricity sector in Albania and a focus towards more non-hydro renewable energy development. In addition, end-use sectors are called to incorporate more renewable-based energy supply and thereby take full advantage of the country's renewable energy potential. In the immediate term, the RRA aims to inform the development of the National Energy and Climate Plan for 2021-2030 and guide subsequent energy sector development to be conducive for renewables, energy security, environmental safeguarding and socio-economic benefits for all citizens.

The RRA report highlights the challenges and gives 11 recommendations for actions in the following key areas:

- Renewable energy potential and planning
- Legislative and regulatory framework
- Renewables in End-uses
- Renewable Energy financing
- Capacity, skills and awareness

Objective

- The virtual launch will feature the official publication of the RRA Albania. The event will serve as a platform to address important topics relevant to the renewable energy development and deployment in Albania amongst government officials and the involved stakeholders and partners
- The session will build on the insights from IRENA's analysis, including the role of the RRA in the development of NDC and NECP in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Audience.

Using Zoom, a cloud based video conference service, the virtual launch will aim to gather participants from government institutions, private sector, financial institutions and development partners, NGOs and academia.

For any questions, please contact Ms. Petya Icheva (picheva@irena.org) and Ms. Aleksandra Prodan (aprodan@irena.org)

Agenda

13:00 –13:10	Opening remarks: <i>Launch of the Renewables Readiness Assessment Albania</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Gjergji Simaku, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Infrastructure & Energy• Mr. Francesco La Camera, IRENA Director General
13:10 –13:20	Presentation: <i>Findings of the Renewable Readiness Assessment Albania</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gurbuz Gonul, Director Country Engagement and Partnerships (CEP)
13:20 –14:20	Panel Discussion: <i>Post Renewables Readiness Assessment action plan. Opportunities and the way forward</i> <u>Moderator:</u> Petya Icheva , Programme officer South East Europe, IRENA <u>Potential Panelists:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gjergji Simaku, Deputy Minister for infrastructure and energy• Naida Taso, Energy Community Secretariat• Hubert Grandjean, EU office in Albania• Mirela Kamberi, UNDP office Albania• Dorina Peristeri, EBRD Office Albania• Nickolas Frydas, IFC Albania• Rigela Gegprifti, Statkraft Albania
14:20 –14:30	Concluding Remarks: Mr. Gjergji Simaku , Deputy Minister, Ministry of Infrastructure & Energy Mr. Gurbuz Gonul , Director, CEP IRENA