



DEPARTMENT OF
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

High-level session: “The Protocol on Water and Health: catalysing sustainable development in the pan-European region”

Mr. László BORBÉLY, State Councillor of the Prime Minister on the topic of Sustainable Development

ROMANIA

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High-level panel discussion

Panel 1: Responding to global changes and threats

- Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Romania, the institutional framework for sustainable development was reinforced by setting up in 2017, as part of the Working Apparatus of the Romanian Government, the Department for Sustainable Development (DSD), a structure dedicated mainly to the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs.
- In order to harmonize the objectives of the strategy with those of the 2030 Agenda, the revision of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development Horizons 2013-2020-2030 (SNDD) was carried out (2017-2018). In November 2018 the new Romania’s Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 (SNDDR) was adopted. The main purpose of the new strategy is to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through:
 - a) institutional reforms by setting up structures as: The Interdepartmental Committee for Sustainable Development; Advisory Council on Sustainable Development; Sustainable development hubs
 - b) strengthened strategical framework through the development of an action plan mirroring our present situation and at the same time being the starting point for a 2030 action plan



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- At the European level during the RO PRES period, Romania played an active role in promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, obtaining the agreement of all Member States for a strong set of Council Conclusions "Towards an ever more sustainable Union by 2030". During this period, Romania has identified two overarching priorities: youth and partnerships with a significant emphasis on the mechanisms that enable and enhance partnerships among different stakeholders, member states and third parties
- The Bucharest Declaration adopted with the occasion of the International Conference on "2030 Agenda: Partnerships for Sustainable Development", organized under the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council, highlights that accelerating national coordination and building in good faith strengthened partnerships shall ensure that both current and future generations can live in a sustainable world
- Making sure that „no one is left behind” by „taking SDGs to the streets” through involvement of citizens and civil society is a critical aspect of the 2030 Agenda. Partnerships with local government entities makes monitoring much more relevant to citizens if it is done at the local level. Therefore, support systems should be in place to educate and encourage people to use online information portals and information and communication technologies. The public can be involved in different ways, including via apps specifically developed for monitoring purposes, which can also help to raise awareness and foster civic engagement.
- The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) provide countries with an opportunity to report on achievements, challenges and lessons learned related, among others, to water and sanitation, using experiences from the implementation of relevant SDGs related to water, sanitation and health, as well as experiences gained through the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health, thereby achieving greater coherence and coordination.
- In Romania, the Protocol on Water and Health has proved to be an important mechanism to implement SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation. The setting of national targets for SDG 6 and other water, sanitation and health related targets capitalized on the targets set under the Protocol. Similarly, the Protocol has been useful in the process of developing the Romanian 2018 Voluntary National Review regarding the above mentioned SDG.
- 6th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, Ostrava (June 2017) having as motto “Better health. Better Environment. Sustainable Choices”, consisted of setting environmental priorities for 21st century Europe, using the levers of the "Environment and Health" process as a platform for the coordinated implementation of SDGs. As regards the WHO European region, life expectancy and other key indicators of health and well-being have



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significantly improved, much of this improvement is due to the reduction of risks associated with environmental factors. However, in the region, 14 people still die each day from diarrheal diseases caused by inadequate water sources, sanitation and poor hygiene (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/water-and-sanitation/data-and-statistics>)

- By adopting the Ostrava Declaration, all Member States of WHO European region have made a key commitment to make a visible and measurable progress, based on national particularities and on the objectives chosen by each state individually. It should be highlighted that Member States have well-coordinated, comprehensive and coherent strategies and policies designed to solve as far as possible the problem of diseases that could be generated by environmental factors. Ostrava was "about choices" and its commitments highlighting the links and synergies which exist with Protocol on Water and Health and other processes, as well as the opportunity to promote a coherent agenda consistently leveraging those platforms. A strategic use of the platforms could support the creation of a critical mass of interest and action on selected topics and offer an opportunity for more efficient use of resources.