



This week's topic
**PROSPECTS FOR A GREEN AND RESILIENT COVID-19
RECOVERY**

A WAKE-UP CALL FOR THAT OTHER LOOMING CRISIS?



They say never let a good crisis go to waste though this one already has in one sense. Aside from a residential pile up, the statistically and visibly positive climate and environmental benefits associated with a global economic downturn will only last as long as the recession.

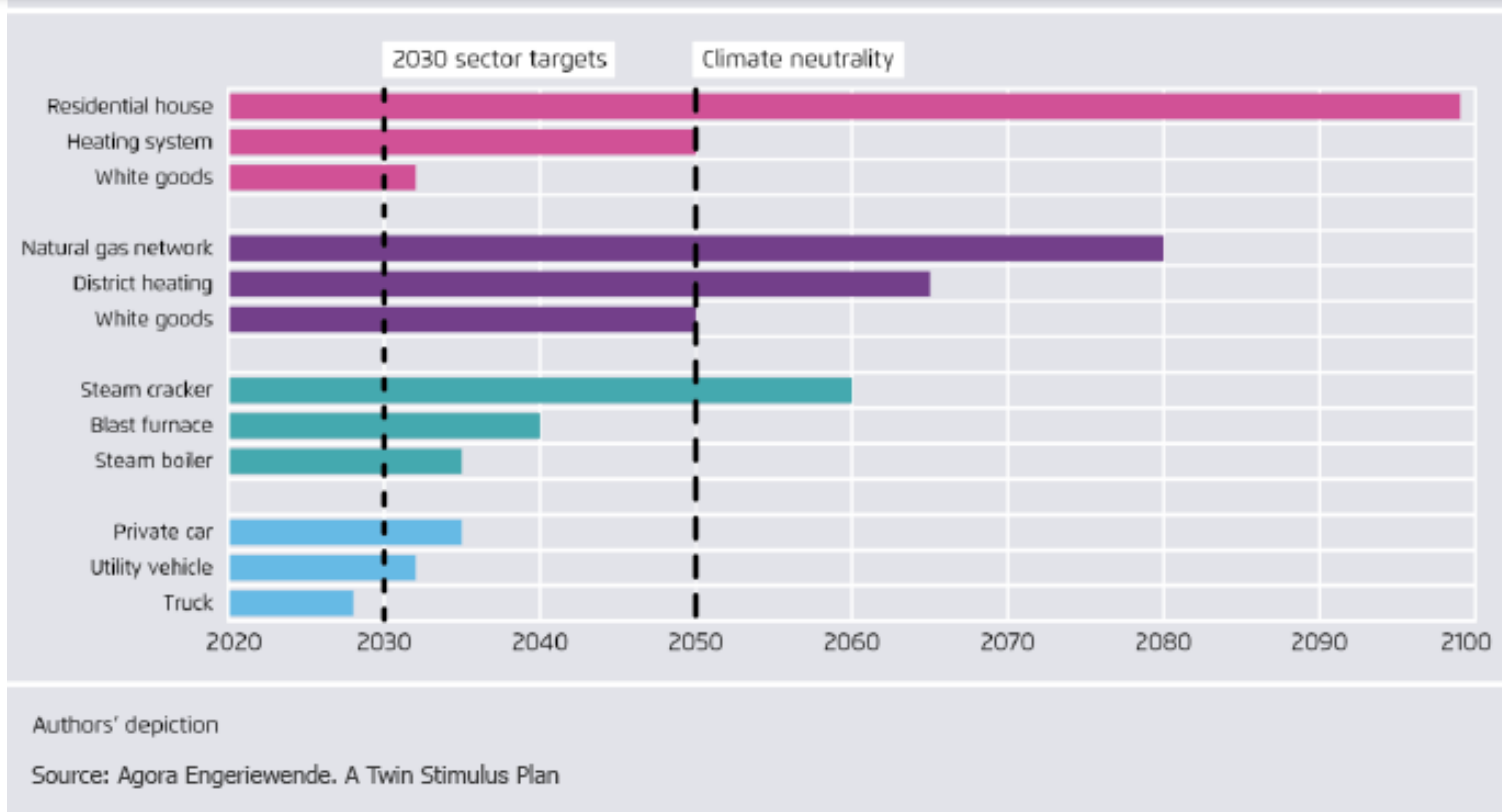
In this particular instance, the convenience of home office and virtual meetings and maybe even the serenity of empty streets will have a more lasting impact that bodes well for urban congestion and air quality, but emissions from transport and other sectors hit by the crisis will come roaring back.

cement production reached its [highest](#) total annual growth ever recorded. Let's hope something of that magnitude will not be repeated, but we should welcome a healthy emissions 'rebound' in 2021 to signal that economic activity is humming again. This should also drive home the point that sacrificing GDP and wealth is not sustainable for society. Climate and environmental objectives will not be successful at the expense of economic activity but by reshaping it – the energy transition is a disruptive growth model pushing out old, inefficient and carbon intensive activities in favor of smart, clean technologies. Cities, countries and continents investing into low carbon industrial and manufacturing processes, infrastructure and energy sources are creating new business opportunities. This is a two-way street meaning consumer culture and behavioral norms will need to evolve as well.

Not letting this crisis go to waste is about tough decisions in coming weeks and months that will lock in technologies and corresponding emissions in the long run. No one asked for it, but this is a historic opportunity for governments to expand clean energy project pipelines and agree to more ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs) aligned with the Paris agreement in the process.



It is also an opportunity for struggling carbon intensive industries that employ millions to lobby for postponement of stricter more expensive environmental regulations and shrug off bailout conditionality. After all, this wasn't their fault. But consider the tradeoffs for propping up an industry already in structural decline or deciding between a new coal blast furnace or replacing with natural gas fueled units that can eventually switch to green hydrogen. But consider the tradeoffs for propping up an industry already in structural decline or deciding to purchase a coal blast furnace instead of natural gas fueled units that can eventually switch to green hydrogen. Investing in jobs and assets that will ultimately be unproductive, lost and stranded even thirty years from now might make for an easy political win in the moment but can be devastating to future competitiveness.



One thing that is certain is that the world has never been better **prepared** to mainstream climate into an economic recovery. **China** was ahead of the curve in 2009, prioritizing green stimulus which helped it become the global heavyweight in solar module manufacturing it is today. Clean technologies that were expensive in 2010 are now competitive and scalable. Europe in particular has the financial (EIB) and legislative (Green Deal) tools in place to pursue a sustainable and resilient recovery at home and, perhaps more importantly, lead this effort abroad. Will we take a giant leap forward or a comfortable step back?

The newly renamed and repurposed Energy Security & Sustainability (ESS) programme officially launches next week and will provide advocacy for the post-COVID-19 leap forward.

PUTTING THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL AT THE HEART OF THE RECOVERY

Our 7 April Brussels webinar featured a panel discussion affirming the commitment and readiness of the EU to put the European Green Deal at the heart of the post-COVID-19 recovery.



consideration of COVID-19, which may cause minor disruptions to the legislative process but will not change the ultimate outcomes. See the two-page outcome report [here](#).

VISEGRAD COUNTRIES TAKING MEASURED APPROACH



Public denouncement of the European Green Deal and ETS has been loud from certain government offices in Czechia and Poland but the former has remained steadfast in its support at the European Council level and elements of the Polish government recognize this as an opportunity to secure more EU funding for its coal regions in transition.

Slovakia became one of 17 and the first V4 member state to sign an open letter [pledging](#) support for the central role of the European Green Deal in the economic response to COVID-19 behind its new Minister of Environment Jan Budaj. Although Hungary has not publicly played its hand, it has been dovish on the European Green Deal to this point and recognizes opportunities linked to recovery.

JUST TRANSITION MECHANISM AND CEE ENERGY TRANSITION

Cohesion countries still expect more funding to support their energy transitions and the main area of contention is how the Just Transition Mechanism will achieve the European Commission's EUR 100 billion level of investment over the next ten years.

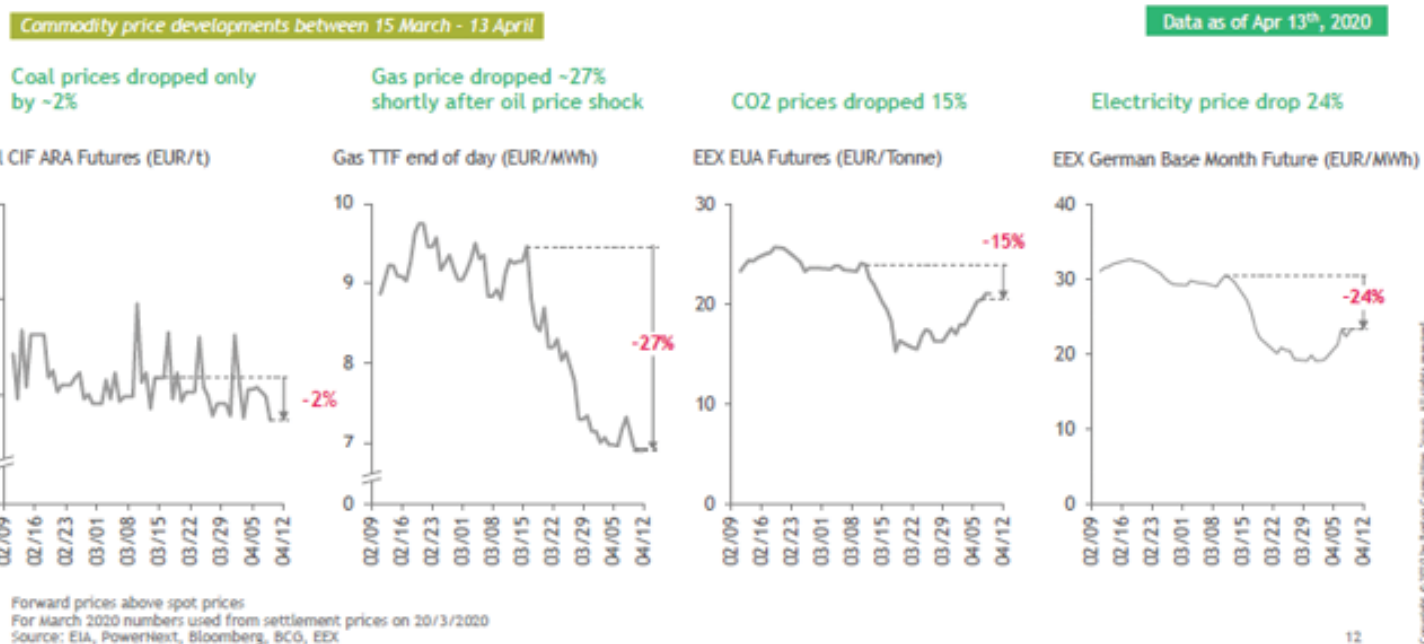


Climate and Energy Fellow Nolan Theisen points out that there will never be enough ‘fresh’ grant money, and ultimately it is incumbent on member states to develop better financial tools and project pipelines to crowd-in private investment for clean technologies to develop sustainable industries and create new jobs. Now there is some uncertainty over such EU funds envisaged to support long-term social and R&I energy transition objectives that could be redirected to ‘ready-to-go’ projects that can be funded and start immediately.

CEE ENERGY SECTOR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

During a virtual call on 3 April, the Lighthouse Energy Transition Task Force discussed the impact of COVID-19, how they were coping with it, and key challenges ahead. See the policy note [here](#).

Commodity price shock: Power price and energy commodity prices fell dramatically, driven lower demand and increased supply from OPEC deal fallout



Boston Consulting Group, “COVID-19: Potential impact, implications and mitigation measures in power and utilities”

EUROPEAN STABILITY MECHANISM GREEN BENCHMARKING

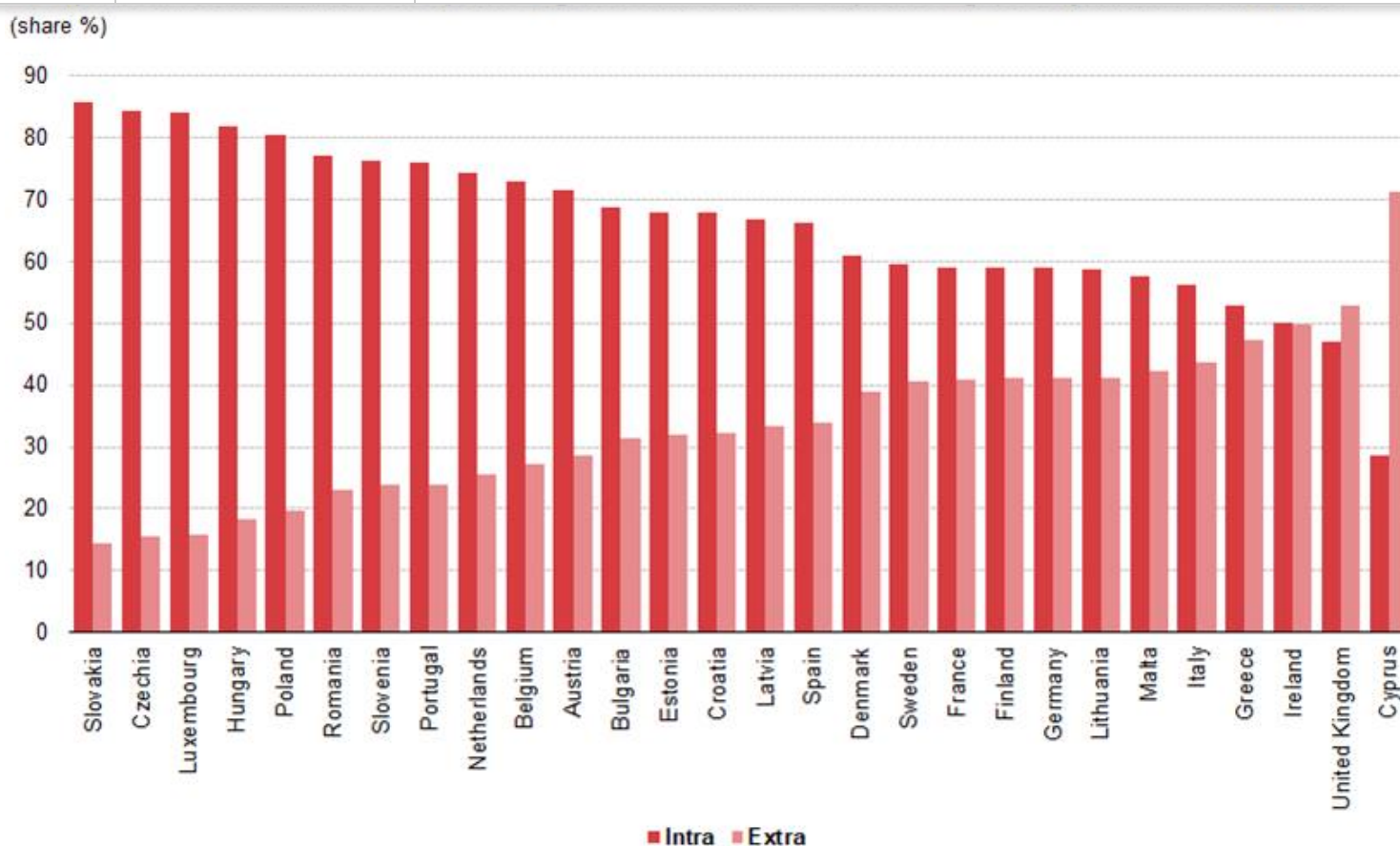


Václav Hudek, Vice Chair, GLOBSEC and Miroslav Kollár, Board Member, 4 Gimmel Investments co-authored an op-ed [Policies Beyond the COVID-19](#) recommending coordinated actions of governments and corporations that will be necessary to transform the economic challenge of COVID-19 into an opportunity.

One key proposal is to allocate unused European Stability Mechanism capacity to member state for post-COVID-19 recovery. These credit lines would be based on country specific recovery plans approved by the Commission under clearly formulated conditions including benchmarks to achieve a ‘smart and clean’ recovery.

SLOVAKIA LOW CARBON ECONOMY PATHWAYS (SLOVAKIA LCEP) PROGRAMME

The newly formed Slovakia LCEP steering committee convened for a virtual roundtable earlier in the month sharing sober assessments of the long road to recovery facing CEE economies that serve as the manufacturing supply chain of Europe, especially for the automotive industry. Slovakia relies on intra-EU exports more than any other EU member state.



Source: Eurostat (online data code: DS-018995)



On a more upbeat note, they also discussed ways in which green policies and funds can both provide an immediate boost to the Slovak economy and contribute to long term emissions reductions, starting with [building renovations](#). See the policy note one pager [here](#).

THE LATEST

NEWS

GLOBSEC Energy Programme renamed to Energy Security & Sustainability (ESS)

GLOBSEC Energy Programme is no longer known as the Energy Programme and has been christened as the Energy Security & Sustainability Programme. The change in name is in line with the wider agenda the programme will address. It will also provide advocacy for the European Green Deal to be an effective tool in the post-COVID-19 economic recovery.

[More Info](#)

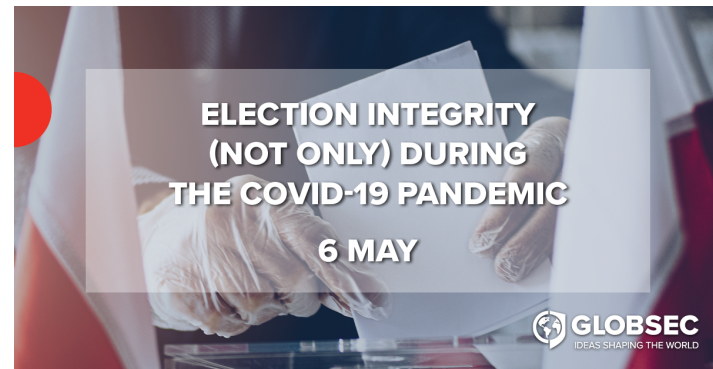
UPCOMING WEBINARS

Election Integrity (not only) during the COVID-19 pandemic

6 May 2020 | 3pm – 4pm CEST (9am – 10am Easter Time)

via ZOOM

More than 50 countries or territories have decided to postpone elections in response to Covid-19 pandemic. However, the cases of democratic primaries in Wisconsin or the ongoing preparation for the presidential election in Poland show some public authorities are willing to take the risk.



While the scientists keep warning that the virus might stay with us for many months to come, will the pandemic threaten the process of regular elections? Why did certain countries decide to hold the elections and how does it affect the public discourse, democratic processes and the election integrity overall?

[Read More](#)

[Register Here](#)

NATO's Deterrence and Defence Agenda

7 May 2020 | 2pm (CET)

via ZOOM

GLOBSEC and the NATO Public Diplomacy Division are co-organizing an online discussion on “NATO’s Deterrence and Defence Agenda” with Mr Patrick Turner, Assistant Secretary General for Defence Policy and Planning.



priorities, challenges and continuous adaptation of NATO's deterrence and defence posture in light of rapidly evolving security environment. Amidst the COVID-19 crisis and unprecedented challenges to NATO nations caused by the pandemic, it is critical to maintain the operational readiness of NATO forces, vigilance and preparedness to respond to any threats, as the potential adversaries are looking for ways to exploit the situation.

[Read More](#)

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WATCH OUR WEBINARS

Border(less) Europe: When do we go back to normal?



Borders and travels restrictions are being introduced in a pervasive manner to contain the spread of coronavirus. This includes in Europe – the continent that has been proudly border free, owing to the Schengen zone, for three decades and reaped immense economic benefits from it.

The underlying assumption is that border controls and travel bans are a temporary provision. The borders and travel restrictions within the Schengen zone ought to be lifted again once the crisis is gone. How to make sure that temporary provisions do not become permanent? What are the lessons learnt from this crisis? How to make Schengen zone more sustainable in the future?

[Watch Here](#)

Resilience of the EU Neighbourhood amid the COVID-19 outbreak

strong social, economic and even political impact on the EU immediate neighbourhood, namely the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkan regions.



And at this point, the support of the international partners for stabilization of the situation will be crucial. Will the EU be able to meet the expectations of its neighbours, as it addresses its internal crises? Taking into account the recent statements of Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić on turning his country's eyes to China due to the lack of European solidarity, and the increase of disinformation concerning COVID-19, are we facing an increased threat of destabilization of the EU Neighbourhood by third actors?

Watch Here

JOIN COOPERATIVE SECURITY INITIATIVE

Europe is divided. This is not just about Russia versus the West, is it also about deep divisions between Turkey and the European Union, Great Britain and the EU, divisions in the Western Balkans, and within states.



Cooperative Security Initiative (CSI)

... before it's too late

GLOBSEC
IDEAS SHAPING THE WORLD

FRIEDRICH
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FES Regionales Büro für
Zusammenarbeit und
Frieden in Europa
1100 Regional Office for
Cooperation and Peace
in Europe

European security is broken. Whereas war in Europe was “unthinkable” just a few years ago, there is a hot conflict in eastern Ukraine, and protracted conflicts in other parts of the OSCE area. There are also serious internal tensions within some European countries. And now, the global pandemic, showed us how vulnerable we are in dealing with an invisible enemy. The [Cooperative Security Initiative](#), powered by GLOBSEC and FES ROCPE, brings [19 questions](#) for a safer future to your attention. Lend us your voice and share with us your thoughts on the future of security and cooperation in Europe and beyond.

Read More

WATCH OUR NEW DEBATE SHOW ON INSTAGRAM



FIRST EPISODE

7 May 2020 @ 7 pm CEST

[Instagram | globsecthinktank](#)

What topics will shape our future? Join us on Instagram every Thursday at 7 pm CET for a chat with young leaders who will share their takes on what the future holds. A host of pressing issues as well as some more entertaining topics will be chewed over only FOR CHAT'S SAKE!

[Watch Teaser](#)

GLOBSEC's **COVID-19 in CEE newsletter** is a weekly roundup targeting specific topics in connection with the spread of the coronavirus and its impact on life in the **CEE region**. Our researchers and experts will dive into many pressing issues the pandemic has brought to the fore, putting coronavirus developments and impact on the future of the EU, global economy, sustainability, digitalisation in context.

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WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN!

Do you have something you'd like to share with us for future Weekly Roundups?

Is there any specific topic you're interested in?

You can definitely share your suggestions with us on comms@globsec.org or reach out to us on social media channels.

GLOBSEC Team



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