

Abstract

With their accession to the EU the Visegrad countries subscribed to the fundamental objective of the Union under the Lisbon Treaty – sustainable development. They have undergone substantial reforms, brought their policies into compliance with EU standards and regulations. Nevertheless, a lot of work should still be done in the Visegrad Four in order integrate sustainable development approach into all of the fields of political activity and reorganize their decision-making models according to the new challenges. This study constitutes an analysis of the Visegrad states' performance in ensuring sustainable governance in the period 2005-2010. The research is based on the two editions of Sustainable Governance Indicators, developed by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, and published in 2009 (period of review: January 2005 – March 2007) and in 2011 (period of review: May 2008 – April 2010). In order to assess sustainability of the four Visegrad democracies the study provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of these states' performance and retraces the dynamics of their progress/regress in terms of ensuring sustainability. It also explores the main tendencies of the Visegrad region's development regardless of particular country, identifies the main strengths and weaknesses of the region in terms of countries' capability to successfully meet critical challenges (global economic crisis, demographic changes) and move towards sustainability by drawing a comparison of the region's records with the OECD average scores. The results of the analysis help to clarify the major problems which hamper the Visegrad states' further progress towards sustainable development.