

New report shines light on EU summit discussions on energy security

Ambitious climate and energy targets could cut imports by 45 per cent more than Commission plans by 2030

Strong EU commitments on renewable energy and energy efficiency could reduce the need for imports by 45 per cent by 2030 compared to the EU's existing plans, according to a new report released today. The report comes as EU leaders prepare to meet on Thursday and Friday to grapple with Europe's dependence on energy imports and to prepare the ground for new climate and energy policies for the next decade.

So far, the EU has largely dealt with energy security and climate-related energy concerns as separate issues. The Greenpeace report, *A roadmap towards a sustainable and independent energy supply for Europe* [1], shows that the two issues are inextricably linked, as 2030 targets have the potential to drastically reduce fossil fuel imports from Russia and elsewhere.

In May, the European Commission issued an energy security plan [2]. It focussed on short term responses to supply cuts and measures to diversify import routes, replacing dependence on Russia with dependence on other fossil fuel providers, but broadly avoided the issue of reducing Europe's considerable overall addiction to energy imports.

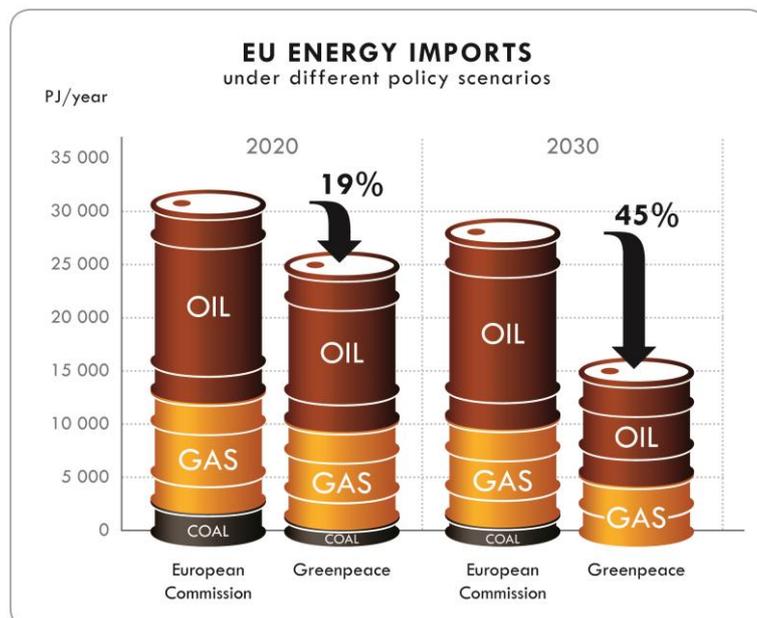
In January this year, the Commission suggested that the EU should cut carbon emissions by 40 per cent and raise the share of renewables to 27 per cent by 2030. It has so far failed to propose an energy efficiency target for 2030. The EU is currently implementing three targets for 2020 to reduce carbon emissions and increase the uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Under the Commission's 2030 plan, growth in the renewables sector would drop from almost seven per cent per year in the current decade to under two per cent between 2020 and 2030. By 2030, Europe's energy consumption would drop by less than 15 per cent compared to 2010.

Untapped potential

The new report compares the effects on energy import needs under the Commission's plan and under more ambitious policies, as advocated by Greenpeace. It shows that energy imports would remain high under the Commission's proposed 2030 targets.

According to the Commission's own estimates, energy imports would decrease by 11 per cent in 2030, compared to 2010. Despite this small reduction, the EU's share of imports would be roughly the same in 2030 (54 per cent) as it is today. The EU's net annual import bill would also rise from €421



billion today to €452 billion on average between 2011 and 2030 [3].

However, more stringent EU 2030 targets to achieve a 45 per cent share of renewables, 40 per cent energy savings (compared to 2005) and a 55 per cent cut in domestic carbon emissions (compared to 1990) could reduce annual imports of fossil fuels by at least 45 per cent compared to the Commission's plan. By 2030, gas imports could be reduced by a further 35 per cent and oil imports by a further 45 per cent. As coal power plants are phased out in the 2030s, coal imports would cease altogether before the end of the next decade.

By 2030, Europe's energy consumption would be about 35 per cent lower than in 2010, with 46 per cent of that covered by clean and home-grown renewable energy [4]. Carbon emission cuts would also be much higher than under the Commission's plan, reaching over 60 per cent for energy-related CO₂ emissions.

The report, commissioned by Greenpeace and based on research by DLR, the German Institute of Technical Thermodynamics, develops two energy scenarios: one based on the Commission's 2030 plans and one based on a more ambitious policy framework for 2030.

A recently leaked analysis by the Commission, produced as part of the review of the Energy Efficiency Directive, confirms that an EU target to reduce overall energy consumption would lower energy imports significantly, while creating more jobs [5].

Political battle

A number of EU countries have produced their own detailed proposals on energy security, notably **Poland**, the **UK**, **Spain** and **Portugal**, and the three **Baltic states (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia)**. Most of the proposals overlook the potential of renewable energy and energy efficiency. Poland backs coal and shale gas, the UK promotes shale gas and nuclear energy, and Baltic states want shale gas, oil shale and peat. Spain and Portugal support increased gas and power interconnections, some of which are aimed at boosting the role of renewable power.

However, seven EU countries want the role of energy efficiency in boosting energy security to be recognised in the Commission's forthcoming 2030 energy efficiency proposal. On 17 June, ministers from Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Portugal, Greece, Ireland and Luxembourg sent a letter to the Commission asking to table an ambitious and binding 2030 energy efficiency target in July. They said that "*energy efficiency is the most robust and cost effective means of increasing energy security*" [6].

Germany, the UK, France, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Slovenia and Estonia [7], as well as **Austria, Ireland, Greece and Luxembourg** support a binding EU-level 2030 renewables target. Among these, Denmark, Germany, Greece and Luxembourg want a renewable energy target of 30 per cent; Portugal advocates a 40 per cent target. These countries are backed by a wide coalition of green energy companies [8].

Other countries, led by the **UK** and **Poland**, and supported by many of Europe's largest energy companies, oppose binding national 2030 targets for renewables and efficiency.

At the March summit, EU leaders concluded that '*moderating energy demand through enhanced energy efficiency should be the first step which will also contribute to other energy and climate objectives*'. They also agreed that the EU 2030 climate and energy package should be based on a '*supportive EU framework for advancing renewable energies*' [9].

Europe's energy giants are fighting hard against any binding or ambitious targets for energy efficiency or renewables. These companies have failed to embrace renewable energy technologies and are still heavily invested in fossil fuels and nuclear energy [10], including in Russia [11]. They are keen to expand the infrastructure that keeps Europe hooked on imports of fossil fuels. Companies that own gas pipelines, storage

facilities and liquefied natural gas regasification plants, such as GDF-Suez and E.ON, stand to benefit from the Commission's fossil fuel-focused plan, according to Moody's Investor Service [12].

Next steps in the EU and beyond

The Commission has so far failed to make concrete recommendations to reduce energy imports, such as establishing emergency EU financing mechanisms for large-scale building renovation programmes and accelerating the deployment of renewable heating technologies. Such measures would not only reduce Europe's energy dependence, but also boost employment across the EU.

After the EU summit, the Commission is expected to present a review of existing energy efficiency policies (the EU is expected to miss its voluntary 2020 target) and to propose a new target for energy savings for 2030 in July.

EU leaders and ministers are expected to continue informal discussions throughout the summer, ahead of a United Nations climate change summit in New York on 23 September. They are expected to reach a final agreement on 2030 climate and energy policies and energy security measures at an EU summit on 23-24 October.

Notes:

[1] Greenpeace report, [A roadmap for Europe – towards a sustainable and independent energy supply](#), June 2014.

[2] Greenpeace [press briefing](#), 28 May 2014

[3] Commission staff working document: [Impact assessment for a 2030 climate and energy policy framework](#), 22 January 2014

[4] Numbers relate to primary energy consumption

[5] https://www.foeeurope.org/sites/default/files/commission_ia_2030_energy_efficiency.pdf

[6] [Letter](#) by governments in support of a binding EU 2030 energy efficiency target, 18 June 2014.

[7] [Green Growth Group ministers' statement on a climate and energy framework for 2030](#), 3 March 2014.

[8] Reuters, [Green energy firms clash with big utilities on EU policy](#), 12 February 2014.

[9] European Council conclusions, March 2014:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141749.pdf

[10] Greenpeace report, [Locked in the past: why Europe's big energy companies fear change](#), 27 February 2014.

[11] EnergyDesk, [Who is invested in Russia's energy?](#), 12 June 2014.

[12] Bloomberg News, [E.on to A2A seen aided by lengthy Russia gas outage, Moody's says](#), 16 May 2014

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