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Climate law trilogues: slow progress

On 4th March 2020, the European Commission proposed the first European Climate Law in order to write into law the EU climate neutrality objective by 2050. In September 2020, the Commission communication on Stepping up Europe’s 2030 Climate Ambition has enriched the draft Climate Law with the proposal to achieve at least the 55% of GHG emissions reduction by 2030. From November 2020 on co-legislators have started negotiating in trilogues. In a nutshell: on one side, the European Parliament calls for increasing the target to 60% by 2030 and for negative emissions post-2050, and asked the EC to provide a trajectory towards climate neutrality by 2050, eventually setting an intermediate target for 2040; on the other side, the Council endorses a binding target of 55% by 2030, de facto aligning to the EC proposal, and calls for the recognition of Member States’ different starting points and of their right to decide their energy mix to reach the objective, including also transitional technologies such as gas. Moreover, the EC and Council talk about a “net” target, aka including carbon removals from agriculture, land use and forestry (“carbon sinks”), which raises criticism in the EP. The result is that one year after the beginning of the legislative process and four rounds of negotiations, progresses are slow. Apparently, the target itself has not been discussed yet and the parties are not very “flexible” on the topic. More info the article [here](#).

European Parliament: vote on European data strategy report

During its [next plenary session on 25 March](#), the European Parliament will vote on its position on a European data strategy. By responding to the [Commission’s European Strategy for Data](#), the EP will lay the foundations for its further positioning on ongoing and upcoming proposals on data, like the [Data Governance Act proposal](#) – on which negotiations in the Council and Parliament are just kicking-off. Rapporteur Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (S&D, FI) has prepared the [report](#) in the Parliament’s industry, research and energy committee (ITRE).

With its draft report, MEPs call for the free flow of data to be the guiding principle of an EU data economy. MEPs insist to build the data governance model, including common European data spaces, on a decentralised data operating environment. Linked to the Data Governance Act, the report welcomes EC’s plans for classification, certification and interoperability of data intermediaries. Further, the report calls for the urgent development of the nine common European data spaces that were previously announced by the EC. The draft report also addresses the [Open Data Directive](#), including the implementing act on high-value data sets which is soon to be expected, by encouraging the EC to extend the scope of the Directive to additional public data sets. On infrastructures the report stresses that the digital divide must be effectively addressed both across and within Member States, amongst others by improving access to high-speed broadband and very high-capacity networks. Finally, it emphasises the need of a strengthened cybersecurity framework and urges the Commission to present solutions and cybersecurity standards suited to market players of all sizes, including micro enterprises and SMEs.

ITRE kicks off legislative work on Data Governance Act

On 18 March 2021 the ITRE committee started the legislative work with an exchange of views on the [Commission proposal for a Regulation on a European data governance](#), the so-called “Data Governance Act”. ITRE has appointed MEP Angelika Niebler (EPP, DE) as Rapporteur: she has been serving in the EP already more than 15 years and was Rapporteur on the Cybersecurity Act in the previous legislative term. Niebler will submit her draft report for translation this week. Deadline for amendments on her draft report (to be published) is 26 April 2021.

The exchange of views will be followed by a [public hearing](#) on 25 March (15:45-17:45): “Data Governance Act: how to enable data-driven innovation for the benefit of businesses and society?”.

EC presents: Roadmap on the revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive

On 22 February the European Commission has published the roadmap on the review of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), as foreseen by the EU Green Deal. The EPBD, already up for revision under the Clean Energy Package, is considered one of the vehicles to deliver on the Renovation Wave and tackle decarbonization of the building sector, notably speeding up energy renovation of the European building stock. Therefore, and without indulging on details, the EC lists a series of points that might be revised. These includes the progressive introduction of mandatory minimum energy performance standards for different types of buildings – eventually accompanied by support policies to ensure affordability of housing – an update of the framework for Energy Performance Certificates, the introduction of Building Renovation Passports, an update of requirements for new buildings and measures fostering sustainable mobility. The roadmap can be found [here](#).

Innovation Fund: outcome of 1st call for small-scale projects

The first Innovation Fund call for small-scale projects with capital expenditure between €2.5m and €7.5m has just closed. According to the [Commission](#), this call attracted more applications in the framework of renewable electricity and heat and energy storage sector than the large-scale projects call. In addition, 125 projects for energy-intensive industries have been submitted, out of which 1/3 in hydrogen. The winning projects will be announced around August 2021.

The Innovation Fund is expected to [provide](#) €10billion over 2020-2030 to support the commercial demonstration of innovative low-carbon technologies. Further calls for proposals, one for large-scale and one for small-scale projects, are planned to be launched later in 2021.

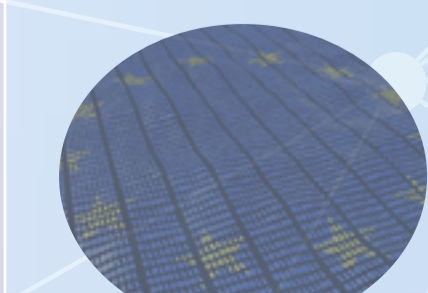
FROM OUR MEMBERS!

From our members: Synergrid and belgian Grid Operators are SDG Voices 2021

With the slogan “Ensemble, connectons-nous à l’énergie durable” or “Samen geconnecteerd voor een duurzame energietoekomst” (in EN: “Together, let’s connect to sustainable energy”), the belgian association Synergrid, and the belgian DSOs and TSOs for electricity and gas, have been awarded the title of SDG Voices 2021 by the belgian Minister of the Climate, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Green Deal and the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development. The mission of the SDG Voices is to showcase the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also to make them more accessible to citizens and businesses. If you want to find out more check out the #GRID4SDG on social media or read the [press release](#).

Reading of the month
[DG ENER - Report on barriers in EU retail energy markets](#)

Ongoing consultations
 → [Public consultation on new rules on preventing methane leakage in the energy sector](#) – deadline 1 May 2021



Upcoming meetings & Events
 → ENZA Launch Event: Removing silos will deliver on the EU’s climate and energy objectives: 30 March 2021 ([Register here](#))
 → CEDEC WG Gas: 7 April 2021
 → CEDEC WG Digitalisation: 5 May 2021
 → CEDEC WG Network Codes Electricity: 5 May 2021

Spotlight on: New look for DG Energy

Just few days ago, the College of Commissioners [appointed](#) Ms Paula Pinho as Director of the Directorate for Just Transition, Consumers, Energy Efficiency and Innovation in the Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER), replacing acting director Hans Van Steen. Pinho is no new kid on the block : she has been Head of Unit in DG ENER since 2015, and was acting Director between 2019 and 2020. As acting Director, she was in charge of energy strategy and coordination of energy policy in the context of the Green Deal and Recovery. This is just one of the many moves that transformed DG ENER since the new Director General Ditte Juul Jørgensen took office in August 2019. Many new names appeared, and the organigramme is so work-in-progress that whoever updates it would struggle to keep up. Below is the latest version, updated on 16 January, 2021:

