
AT A GLANCE: EU INSTITUTIONS START TO TAKE FORM – NEW COMMISSION PRESIDENT PROPOSES AMBITIOUS ENERGY AND CLIMATE AGENDA – THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLEAN ENERGY PACKAGE WILL BE A PRIORITY FOR THE FINNISH PRESIDENCY – POLAND IS EXPECTED TO DELAY DECISION ON THE EU'S 2050 CLIMATE GOAL – INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY DISCUSSES TECHNOLOGIES FOR A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE – ELECTRIC CAR MODELS WILL TRIPLE IN EUROPE BY 2021

Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

New Commission President proposes ambitious energy and climate agenda **P.3**

COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency **P.4**

EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future **P.6**

CLEAN TRANSPORT

Electric car models will triple in Europe by 2021 **P.7**

GLOSSARY

MEP: Member of the European Parliament, a co-legislator within the EU that is made up of representatives from political parties throughout Member States.

COUNCIL OF THE EU: Co-legislator, made up of representatives from Member State Governments. Has a six-month rotating presidency, currently held by Finland until the end of December 2019.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL: The European Council is made up of the leaders of the EU member states, commonly known as EU27. It defines the EU's overall political direction and priorities but does not pass laws.

Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

New Commission President proposes ambitious energy and climate agenda **P.3**

COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency **P.4**

EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future **P.6**

CLEAN TRANSPORT

Electric car models will triple in Europe by 2021 **P.7**

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EU ELECTIONS

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At the beginning of the month of July 2019, after intense negotiations, the European Council proposed a package for the top EU jobs. The President of the European Commission, who was later endorsed by the European Parliament, will be Ursula von der Leyen (German/Christian Democrats) for the next five years. The President of the European Council will be Charles Michel (Belgian/Liberal) from December 2019 to May 2022. Christine Lagarde (France/Christian Democrats) will be heading the European Central Bank, while Josep Borrell (Spain/Socialist) is to be the next Foreign Affairs High Representative. Finally, David Sassoli (Italy/Socialist) is the new President of the European Parliament.

While Ursula von der Leyen won the support of the European Parliament, she did so by a very narrow majority (383 votes in favour, 327 against and 22 abstentions). This is only a little above the absolute majority of 374 she required.

The vote also signalled a lack of party discipline in the next European Parliament, which is likely to be visible on every future legislative dossier. Due to the secret ballot, several Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from different political families went against the line of their group. The Socialists are a clear example, with the group publicly declaring its support to von der Leyen ahead of the vote, while only a small fraction actually voted in favour.

To date, fifteen countries have confirmed their designated European Commissioner candidate. If the future President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, is to honour her promise to have a gender balanced College, she will have to pressure remaining countries to designate more female candidates, as for the moment there are only five confirmed women on the list.

Moreover, in mid-July 2019, the European Parliament elected its new Committee Chairs and Vice-Chair for the next two years and a half. **Adina-Ioana Valean** (Romania/Christian Democrats) will be chairing the Industry, Research and Energy Committee, while **Pascal Canfin** (France/Liberals) will be the chair of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee.

(Source: [Interel](#))

Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

New Commission President proposes ambitious energy and climate agenda **P.3**

COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency **P.4**

EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future **P.6**

CLEAN TRANSPORT

Electric car models will triple in Europe by 2021 **P.7**

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COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

New Commission President proposes ambitious energy and climate agenda



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On Wednesday 17 July 2019, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen delivered a **speech** in front of the European Parliament in which she outlined her energy and climate agenda. She devoted an extensive part of the speech to environmental issues and proposed a **European Green Deal** to be launched in the first 100 days in office. This new deal will include the first European Climate Law to enshrine the 2050 climate neutrality target, which is still being negotiated by Member States.

She also promised to increase the 2030 energy targets, especially in the field of emissions reductions. The EU currently has a goal of 40% emissions reduction by 2030 and this will be, in principle, increased to 55%, as demanded by the socialists and the liberals. Moreover, she stated that she will also propose to extend the Emissions Trading System to cover the maritime sector and reduce the free allowances allocated to airlines over time, and to introduce a Carbon Border Tax to avoid carbon leakage.

(Source: [Intereit](https://www.intereit.eu))

Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

New Commission President proposes ambitious energy and climate agenda **P.3**

COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency **P.4**

EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future **P.6**

CLEAN TRANSPORT

Electric car models will triple in Europe by 2021 **P.7**

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The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency



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Riku Huttunen, Director General of the Energy Department at the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, announced in July 2019 that Finland's Presidency of the Council the EU will **focus** on the implementation of energy legislation and aims to lay down long-term policies especially on climate issues. One of the main objectives of the Presidency will be to conclude and adopt the EU's long-term climate strategy, which aims at making the EU carbon neutral by 2050.

The emphasis of the Presidency will be mainly put on the recently adopted Clean Energy Package, which Member States are starting to implement. Under the governance rules, Member States are required to submit integrated national energy and climate plans (NECPs) to the Commission. The Commission has already assessed the draft NECPs. The specific recommendations published together with the Commission communication will be discussed in the first Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council of Finland's Presidency on 24 September 2019.

Research, development and innovation funding at EU and national level will also play an important role for the Finnish Presidency as a means to develop and deploy solutions promoting climate neutrality. This will be discussed during the SET-Plan Conference to be held on 13–14 November 2019 in Helsinki, which normally addresses the role of cities and regions in Europe's energy transition.

(Source: [Politico Pro](#))

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Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

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COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency **P.4**

EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future **P.6**

CLEAN TRANSPORT

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EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal



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At the last meeting of the European Council in June 2019, Poland was one of the four Member States that did not agree to sign a deal on net zero emissions by 2050. Meanwhile, Finland has already **stated** that climate will be a top priority for its 6-month presidency of the Council, with the aim to reach a deal in the European summit in October 2019. However, given the timing of Polish elections in late autumn and simultaneous negotiations over the EU long-term budget this could mean that Poland is unlikely to arrive ready to compromise on that date.

Lidia Wojtal, a former Polish negotiator in the EU, told this month to a climate newspaper that Poland "will not agree to carbon neutrality by October", adding that a deal was more likely to be found at the following European Council meeting in December 2019 or early 2020. Moreover, negotiations over the next EU's long-term budget are expected to be tough, taking into account that Poland faces a 23% cut to "cohesion" funds, which makes them the most negatively impacted EU country in a redistribution of tight funds from east to south.

A new fund proposed by the Commission's President Von der Leyen during her address to the Parliament called "Just Transition Fund" is meant to appease concerns from Poland and other reluctant countries, whose economies are very dependent on coal. This fund is expected to target the regions and people that are most affected by the energy transition and will be part of the new package of Cohesion Funds.

(Source: Euractiv)

Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

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COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

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Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

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CLEAN TRANSPORT

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CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future



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The International Energy Agency (IEA) hosted on 11 July 2019 a discussion among leading global energy sector figures about technologies that can help to bring about a clean energy future, including hydrogen and nuclear power. The discussion addressed two recent major reports from the IEA: **Nuclear Power in a Clean Energy System** and **The Future of Hydrogen: Seizing Today's Opportunities**.

The report on nuclear power stressed that nuclear power is by far the largest source of low-carbon electricity in both Europe and North America, but many of the plants are ageing. Without effective policies to spur new investment, advanced economies could lose as much as two-thirds of their nuclear capacity in the next 20 years, threatening global climate goals and energy security.

On hydrogen, the report highlighted that this technology, which is currently enjoying unprecedented momentum, can help tackle various critical energy challenges. Hydrogen can offer ways to decarbonise a range of sectors where it is proving difficult to significantly reduce emissions, including long-haul transport, chemicals, and iron and steel. Moreover, hydrogen's ability to store and transport energy could enable renewables to make a greater contribution to the global energy system. However, the report also acknowledges that there have been issues in the past when it comes to scaling up infrastructure and bringing down costs.

(Source: International Energy Agency + Intere!)

Edition Content

EU institutions start to take form **P.2**

COMMISSION'S PRIORITIES

New Commission President proposes ambitious energy and climate agenda **P.3**

COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

The implementation of the Clean Energy Package will be a priority for the Finnish Presidency **P.4**

EU'S 2050 CLIMATE STRATEGY

Poland is expected to delay decision on the EU's 2050 climate goal **P.5**

CLEAN ENERGY

International Energy Agency discusses technologies for a clean energy future **P.6**

CLEAN TRANSPORT

Electric car models will triple in Europe by 2021 **P.7**

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CLEAN TRANSPORT

Electric car models will triple in Europe by 2021



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According to a **market study** published by the NGO Transport & Environment, the number of electric car models on the European market will more than triple within the next three years. After several years of slow growth, EU carmakers will be offering 214 electric models in 2021 – up from the 60 available at the end of 2018. Transport & Environment (T&E), which used data from global information provider IHS Markit, said that it seems that most manufacturers are ready to embrace electrification, but governments would need to ensure drivers have the right tax incentives and charging infrastructure to move away from diesel and petrol fast.

Carmakers will bring to the market 92 fully electric models and 118 plug-in hybrid models in 2021, which they need to sell to meet the EU car CO₂ target of 95g/km. If the forecast plans are delivered, by 2025 22% of vehicles produced could have a plug – more than enough to meet the EU's car CO₂ standard for that same year. Meanwhile, the production plans for other alternative drivetrains are almost non-existent: only 9,000 fuel cell cars in total are forecast to be produced by 2025 compared to 4 million electric cars. The production of compressed natural gas cars is even set to decrease, accounting for fewer than 1% of vehicles produced in Europe by the mid-2020s.

The production forecasts show electric car manufacturing progressively replacing diesel engine manufacturing across Europe, with the biggest production centres set to be in western Europe – Germany, France, Spain and Italy. But Slovakia is forecast to be making the highest number of EVs per capita by 2025. The Czech Republic and Hungary will also be significant production centres. The UK remains uncertain as the forecasted EV production growth could easily be reversed in the case of a 'no deal' Brexit.

Already, 16 large-scale lithium-ion battery cell plants are confirmed or likely to come online in Europe by 2023. The confirmed plans alone will deliver up to 131 GWh of battery production capacity, according to data from Benchmark Mineral Intelligence – enough to cover the estimated 130 GWh that will be needed by EVs and stationary storage batteries across Europe in 2023. Based on data from the EU's Joint Research Centre, battery manufacturing on this scale will create around 120,000 jobs directly and indirectly in the battery value chain. But T&E said the EU will also need to ensure batteries sold in Europe have a low carbon footprint and are reused, recycled and sourced ethically.

(Source: Transport & Environment)