

EERA Weekly EU Policy Update

EU AGENDA AND NEWS ON EU CLIMATE, ENERGY, R&I POLICY

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Contents

1. Institutional agenda	1
2. News of the week	2
INSIGHT: CORONAVIRUS, ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT	2
The environmental effects of COVID-19 – Politico.eu	2
IEA warns: “Don’t let coronavirus stop investments in clean energy” amidst falling oil prices and economic troubles - Euractiv	2
Czech Prime Minister, Andrej Babiš, asks the EU to “forget” its plans for the European Green Deal and “focus on the coronavirus instead” – Euractiv.....	2
EU is considering delaying “non-essential” initiatives comprised in the European Green Deal - Euractiv	2
Experts warn about the possible effects on coronavirus mortality of air pollution, which can increase its impact on human health - Euractiv	2
EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL.....	2
Two new strategies published by the Commission to address Industry and the Circular Economy – European Commission	2
The EU announces a Clean Hydrogen Alliance – Euractiv.....	2
Experts propose a two-tier approach for the EU Taxonomy – Euractiv	3
EU makes funding available for clean energy infrastructures – European Commission	3
Industry emissions falling short of reduction targets – Euractiv	3
Electrifying transport, building and industry can deliver the EGD goals, but needs investment – Euractiv.....	3

1. Institutional agenda

EU Meetings of the week		
Council of the EU		
23 March	<u>Working Party on Research</u>	No agenda available
23 March	<u>Working Party on the Environment</u>	No agenda available
24 March	<u>Working Party on Energy</u>	No agenda available



2. News of the week

INSIGHT: CORONAVIRUS, ENERGY, THE ENVIRONMENT

The environmental effects of COVID-19 – Politico.eu

The current crisis related to the spread of Coronavirus has had consequences on environmental issues around the globe. The most visible one is the drop in air pollution and GHG emissions, related to the decrease of travelling (both via air and by car) and to the slowing down of economic activities. However, more waste is being produced (in particular, used medical equipment) and less people are using public transport, preferring personal vehicles to move in cities.

More details [here](#)

IEA warns: “Don’t let coronavirus stop investments in clean energy” amidst falling oil prices and economic troubles - [Euractiv](#)

Czech Prime Minister, Andrej Babiš, asks the EU to “forget” its plans for the European Green Deal and “focus on the coronavirus instead” – [Euractiv](#)

Experts warn about the possible effects on coronavirus mortality of air pollution, which can increase its impact on human health - [Euractiv](#)

EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

EU is considering delaying “non-essential” initiatives comprised in the European Green Deal - [Euractiv](#)

Two new strategies published by the Commission to address Industry and the Circular Economy – European Commission

The Commission has published last week the newest **Industrial Strategy** and **Circular Economy Action Plan**.

The Industry Strategy will try to address the modernisation of EU’s industries and the ways to keep them competitive. In terms of energy, this will mean a new strategy for smart sector integration, a Common European Energy data space and plans for trans-European energy networks and offshore renewable energy. More info [here](#).

The Circular Economy Action Plan will instead focus more on energy efficiency of products, sectors and buildings, mainly through the adoption of a new Ecodesign Directive. The EC document [here](#).

The EU announces a Clean Hydrogen Alliance – Euractiv

Together with the Industrial Strategy, plans were unveiled for a partnership on hydrogen to be launched around this summer. The Alliance is meant to group industry and research organisation for the development of hydrogen as a clean, home-grown gas for the EU. The



initiative is supposed to be modelled on the European Battery Alliance, and both countries and industries have already expressed their enthusiasm for this project.

More info [here](#)

Experts propose a two-tier approach for the EU Taxonomy – Euractiv

The EU Taxonomy will be a tool to help plan investments that also respect the sustainability goals of the European Green Deal. The Taxonomy will provide means for financing the transition of economies towards clear environmental goals by defining what qualifies as a “green” investment. The experts involved in the planning of the Taxonomy have suggested to implement two tiers of assessment, ensuring the respect of strict criteria and that investments do not produce “significant harm” on the environment.

More info [here](#)

EU makes funding available for clean energy infrastructures – European Commission

€980 million of funding for key European energy infrastructure projects are available since 13 March under the scope of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). The call for proposals will be open until 27 May, and projects must be enlisted as Project of Common Interest to be granted funds. The projects must increase competitiveness, enhance the EU’s energy security and contribute to sustainable development, with decarbonisation being the main overarching goal.

More info [here](#)

Industry emissions falling short of reduction targets – Euractiv

Only 18% of 238 assessed industrial actors in the fields of energy and transport are on track to deliver the emissions reductions goals set by the Paris Agreement. This is the result of the latest Transition Pathway Initiative’s (TPI) annual report, signalling a 2% improvement since last year’s performance but a more general bad trend in industry. While some companies have set new targets, others have increased their emissions over the last year.

More details [here](#)

Electrifying transport, building and industry can deliver the EGD goals, but needs investment – Euractiv

Gas and electricity networks can effectively contribute to the goal of climate neutrality, but investments in clean power generation are crucial to exploit their potential. These will be needed in power lines, electrolyzers and power-to-gas facilities mainly, to increase the generating capacity of the system by 75%.

More info [here](#)

