

ENERGY ROADMAP 2050

EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S PUBLIC CONSULTATION
BEUC, THE EUROPEAN CONSUMERS' ORGANISATION'S
RESPONSE

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QUESTIONS

- I. *How can the credibility of work on the transition to a low-carbon energy system in 2050 be ensured? (for example, regular updating of projections using energy system models, focus on developments in technologies, level of expertise needed in each sector, (Between 1 and 500 characters))*

If the EU wants to achieve its goal, the EU leaders must agree on binding targets, set objectives and put forward effective measures. BEUC calls on the European Commission to adopt concrete policy actions and cost-effective tools ensuring a swift implementation. This includes clear criteria for cost-efficiency, a binding methodology for effective monitoring and policy measures underlined by a strategy to guarantee consumer acceptance. All stakeholders must communicate clear information to consumers related to the cost and benefits of a build-up of a low-carbon energy system.

- II. *Looking forward, EU energy policy may be increasingly influenced by developments in global energy supply and demand, international cooperation on climate and initiatives taken outside the EU. Which developments should be considered in the Energy Roadmap 2050? On which do you think a stronger EU line is necessary? (Three most important ones)*

further development of an international framework for cooperation on climate
take-up by other countries of EU model for action on climate change
further development of international standards, trade and investment frameworks
global energy efficiency and demand developments
global nuclear renaissance
global development of renewable energy
global development of carbon capture and storage (CCS)
price developments in global fossil fuel markets
development of energy resources in neighbouring countries and infrastructures linking them with the EU market
other (please specify)

III. What societal challenges and opportunities do you think are likely in Europe over the next decades as a result of changes in the EU and global energy system? On which ones do you think a stronger EU line is needed? (Three most important ones)

economic and employment gains in some parts of the energy sector, in some parts of the EU, losses in others
increased importance of access to high-performance energy infrastructures (eg smart meters and grids)
increased reliance on electricity
creation of sustainable and publicly acceptable energy sources
public acceptance of new infrastructures needed for the EU market (eg large storage technologies, pan-European grid)
increased scope for decentralised power generation and for local, integrated solutions for meeting energy, waste management and other needs of communities
public acceptance of need for increased energy efficiency
changed patterns of disruptions in energy supplies, both fossil and electricity
increases in energy prices and energy poverty
moving of energy-intensive industry to other parts of the world
other (please specify)

IV. The EU's approach to energy policy is founded on regulation and an internal energy market providing competition, innovation, energy efficiency and development of resources including renewables, environmental sustainability, energy security and solidarity, and effective relations with external partners. Which are the main areas which you think might need further policy development at EU level, in a 2050 perspective? Please specify what you think is needed, references to supporting analyses welcome. (Three most important ones)

competition	carbon pricing	internalization of other external costs
RTD, innovation	energy efficiency	transport policy
renewables	financing	energy security
solidarity	development of infrastructures	effective relations with external partners
support for management of transition to affected regions, industries	other (please specify)	

V. *Which milestones would you see as most useful to specify at this stage for the transition to a low-carbon energy system in Europe? (Maximum 2000 characters)*

Action is required at different levels:

- At a global level, we need an effective dialogue between and full commitment of all global players as well as a system of green governance in place.
- At EU level, the European Commission should promote clear rules supporting the EU Member States in their political commitments as well as the commitment regarding the financial obligations in the area of energy efficiency and energy savings.

A transition towards low-carbon energy system can only be achieved by building a low carbon society. This requires:

- 1) Improving energy efficiency;
- 2) Increasing the share of renewable energy sources;
- 3) Guiding consumer behaviour.

BEUC believes that carbon minimisation in all sectors should be supported. In this sense, consumers must be motivated to proactively contribute to the creation of a low carbon society via purchasing environmentally-friendly goods and services. Only if all consumers, including the more vulnerable ones, understand the benefits of behavioural change, have a real choice and are active participants it will be possible to enact the necessary changes.

Moreover, it is important that competitive technologies are widely deployed and the right incentives are being set. It is up to the European Commission to monitor the strategies of the EU Member States to guarantee that consumers' interests are assured and the implementation of smart & low-carbon technologies is based on cost-efficiency.

In order to ensure stability and balance of energy supply in the future, the planning and development of renewable energy needs to take place at European level as only a coordinated approach can be more cost-effective.

Furthermore, BEUC calls on the European Commission to ensure an effective regulatory framework and market mechanisms by putting in place concepts and rules together with measurable outcomes supporting intelligent energy networks as well as a well-functioning, interoperable market for energy efficiency. The Commission should use all means to support the EU Member States to create 'soft' (e.g. HR, information sharing) as well as 'hard' (buildings, transportation etc.) infrastructure.

To conclude, BEUC as a member of the Third Industrial Revolution (TIR) coalition believes that TIR's five pillar infrastructure will significantly facilitate the achievement of 2050 goals.

VI. What are the most likely key drivers for the future energy mix in the EU? (Pick three most important ones)

global fossil fuel prices, compared to costs of domestic energy resources
long term security of supply
public subsidy
expectations about short-term security of supply
political decisions by Member States
gradual integration of internal energy market
international framework for cooperation on climate
EU climate policy
public acceptance of new energy technologies and the related infrastructures
other (please specify)

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS AND THOUGHTS

VII. Do you have additional suggestions or more specific thoughts on the Energy Roadmap 2050? (Maximum 2000 characters)

From a consumer perspective it is important to assess what efforts are required from European citizens and what needs to be done to support consumers when fulfilling their part of this commitment. National governments need to give their citizens the tools to participate in these expected changes, clearly set the objectives as well as explain why these steps are necessary to be taken.

A development towards a low carbon energy system that departs from a correct engagement of consumers consists of:

- **Credibility of green initiatives:** It must be ensured that green policies are credible. Green-washing would lead to disengagement of consumers. It therefore needs to be guaranteed that green claims are clear, credible, substantiated and comparable.
- **Availability of efficient and sustainable consumer products:** The EU should engage in a consequent policy to clean the worst performing products out of the market.
- **Provision of accurate and relevant information:** Labeling and other environmental product information must be clear, correct, verifiable, relevant and harmonised at the EU level. When giving information to consumers ISO Typ I labels seem to be most useful as they cover the full life cycle. Single issue labels such as carbon footprint labels which for instance only indicate a certain amount of CO₂ on a package of crisps are not useful for consumers.
- **A well functioning EU-wide internal energy market** as well as **increased consumer rights** regarding their contractual relationships towards energy suppliers, including access to redress. It is also essential that energy remains affordable, accessible and available for all.

It is important to notice that labeling and product information alone will not achieve this behavioural change. Consumers have to face the unclear labels, often put on the market without prior evaluation regarding consumers' understandability and usability. It needs to be stressed that there is no "One-Size-Fits-All" solution as far as labeling is concerned.

It also has to be clear that a vision of 2050 still leads to investments that have to be made in a short-term-perspective. The EU needs a strategy to cope with investments, communicate costs and benefits and be aware that fuel poverty might become an increasing reality for consumers.