

**Contact:** Pauline Constant: [press@beuc.eu](mailto:press@beuc.eu) | Tel: +32 (0)498 57 31 65  
**Date:** 06/02/2024  
**Reference:** BEUC-PR-2024-003

### **EU 2040 climate targets: consumer groups urge roll out of ambitious laws**

Today [the EU Commission has proposed](#) a 90% cut in the EU's greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, compared to 1990 levels in a bid to become carbon neutral by 2050. To reach this target, BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation, calls on decision makers to make the roll out of ambitious climate legislation their number one priority.

The communication no longer includes a reference to a 30% cut in non-CO2 emissions from agriculture. Sections recognising the role of lifestyle changes, including dietary shifts, in bringing greenhouse gases emissions down have also been dropped – even though the communication still hints at the role of the food industry in making healthy diets more accessible and affordable to consumers. BEUC calls on the Commission to address food, an untapped sector, as part of its climate targets and swiftly publish long-awaited measures to make our food systems sustainable.

#### **Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:**

"Contrary to some policymakers' calls, now is certainly not the time to cast doubt over the direction of travel the EU must take. This is the time for decision makers to roll out the climate-friendly laws that were recently adopted. The climate and environmental transition is undoubtedly challenging, but coming to a standstill, or worse, making a U-turn, would be far more challenging.

"Moving on to the roll out phase especially matters for ground-breaking decisions freshly adopted. In short, we want no backpedaling, we need consistent roll out and ambitious future initiatives. Given the 2035 fossil-fuelled cars phase out secured last year after long and difficult talks, car electrification is an absolute no-brainer and those pushing to reverse the combustion engine phase out are heading in the wrong direction. Decision makers must now focus on the 'how' rather than the 'if'. The EU should publish rules which make electric car charging easier. There must also be a plan to tackle not just cars but all transport.

"However hard the Commission tries to handle farmers with kid gloves, facts are stubborn things: our food and agriculture systems contribute a big chunk of the EU's climate impact. Consumers are willing to change the way they eat and play their part in the fight against climate change, provided sustainable, healthy food becomes more available and affordable. Now the ball is in the court of the next European Commission, which will have to publish the long overdue Sustainable Food Systems law proposal. Such a law must incentivise the food industry and retailers to better support consumers in the transition."

“Reaching EU climate targets requires getting consumers on board. For this to happen, the transition to more sustainable lifestyles must be easy, attractive, and affordable. If well designed and rolled out, the transition can increase consumer well-being, from cutting energy bills to eating healthier food.”

## **Background**

[BEUC's response](#) to the 2040 target public consultation, 2023

[BEUC brief 'Shifting diets for health and climate'](#), as part of our '[Put Change on the Menu](#)' project, 2024.

*If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please let us know.*

