

EU climate action: major deadlines of 2021

10 February 2021

Context

On December 11, 2019, the European Commission published its communication on the **European Green Deal**, a “*plan to make the EU's economy sustainable*” through the development of a renewed growth strategy.

While 2020 and the European agenda have been turned upside down, the Commission has reaffirmed that the fight against climate change remains its **priority**. The Commission's work programme has highlighted its commitment, notably through the publication of:

- The proposal for a European climate law to ensure a climate-neutral European Union by 2050;
- The adoption of the European Industrial Strategy;
- The presentation of the “Farm to fork strategy”;
- The presentation of the 2030 Climate Target Plan;
- The European Climate Pact¹.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is one of the main objectives of the European Green Deal to make possible the fight against climate change. To do so, the European Commission took two strong commitments in this domain: reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55%² by **2030** and become the world's first climate-neutral continent by **2050**.

European rules in line with the 2030 and 2050 objectives

The **European Climate Law** establishes an ambitious general framework for 2050. In order to reach this goal, all **European policies** must converge towards achieving a carbon-neutral balance for the Union. Through this law, the Commission wishes to **legally bind the Member States** to ensure that the 27 contribute to the climate neutrality of the continent. **Before September 2023**, the national measures taken by each State will be examined to ensure that they contribute to the objectives. This assessment will then take **place every five years**.

At the EU level, the Commission has defined a **2021 work programme** with the aim of preparing the “**Fit for 55 package**” from now on. In order to achieve this objective, new European legislative rules will be proposed by the Commission, and pre-existing rules will be reviewed and updated. **All European policies must be aligned with the EU's environmental priorities**.

¹ Non-exhaustive list

² Compared to 1990 levels



2021 major deadlines for achieving climate neutrality

The work of the European Commission will have a **crucial impact on parts of the European economy**. Stakeholders in various sectors of activity must therefore be aware of current and future legislative and regulatory developments.

Below are **some of the major deadlines for 2021** within the framework of the European Union's climate ambition.

Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

- **National emissions reduction targets (Effort Sharing Regulation) - review based on 2030 climate target plan**
 - Following the public [consultation](#), a proposal for regulation should be adopted by the European Commission in **Q2 2021** to set the annual reductions in CO2 emissions of the Member States from 2021 to 2030.
- **Climate change - updating the EU emissions trading system (ETS)**
 - Following the public [consultation](#), a proposal for a directive will be adopted in **Q2 2021**.
- **EU Green Deal (carbon border adjustment mechanism)**
 - The European Commission is expected to adopt a proposal for a [directive](#) in **Q2 2021** (*initially planned for Q1 2021*) with the aim of limiting any risk of carbon leakage through the transfer of companies' production.
- **Revision of the Regulation on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry**
 - The Commission will propose a revised version of the regulation in **Q2 2021**.

Industry

- **Industrial pollution - European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (updated rules)**
 - The public [consultation](#) is open until 23/03/2021. A proposal for regulation should be adopted by the Commission in **Q4 2021** in order to achieve the objectives of the Green Deal and to share relevant information more widely with European citizens.
- **Industrial emissions - EU rules updated**
 - The public [consultation](#) is open until 23/03/2021. A proposal for a directive should then be adopted by the Commission in **Q4 2021** (*initially planned for Q3 2021*) to ensure the implementation of more sustainable practices by the industry.

Transport

- **Revision of the Regulation setting CO2 emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles**
 - The Commission will review this regulation in **Q2 2021**.
- **CO2 emissions from shipping – encouraging the use of low-carbon fuels**
 - In **2021**, the Commission should adopt a proposal for a [directive](#) in order to increase the share of sustainable alternative fuels for such transportation (*initially planned for Q4 2020*).

Energy

- **EU energy efficiency directive (EED) - evaluation and review**
 - Following the public [consultation](#), a proposal for a directive will be adopted during **Q2 2021** (*initially planned for Q1 2021*) to assess how greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced from 50 to 55% by 2030.

- **EU renewable energy rules - review**
 - Following the public [consultation](#), the Commission is expected to adopt a proposal for a directive in **Q2 2021** (*originally planned for Q1 2021*) to improve the energy system.
- **EU Green Deal - Revision of the Energy Taxation Directive**
 - The Commission will adopt a proposal for a [directive](#) in **Q2 2021** to align the taxation of energy products with other climate and energy policies.
- **Revision of the Directive on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure**
 - The Commission will adopt a proposal for a directive in **Q2 2021**.
- **Climate change - new rules to prevent methane leakage in the energy sector**
 - A public [consultation](#) is open by the Commission until **01/05/2021**. The Commission will then adopt a proposal for a regulation in **Q4 2021** (*originally planned for Q3 2021*) to combat the harmful effects of methane.
- **Revision of the Third Energy Package for gas (Directive 2009/73/EU and Regulation 715/2009/EU) to regulate competitive decarbonised gas markets**
 - A revised version will be adopted in **Q4 2021**.
- **Revision of the energy performance of Buildings Directive**
 - A revised version of the directive is expected to be adopted in **Q4 2021**.

[Contribute to the ecological transition](#)

The policies developed by the European Union will have an impact on all our societies. European citizens, private actors, and Member States will have to comply with the new European rules and participate in achieving the objectives defined for 2030 and 2050. The various sectors of activity can as of now address environmental issues in order to make their voice heard and anticipate their future European strategy.

Lighthouse Europe supports its clients in the implementation of these policies and assists a number of sectors at the European and French levels.

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