

Newsletter

October – November 2020

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Commission Work Programme 2021

On 19 October 2020, the European Commission published its work programme for 2021 entitled “A Union of vitality in a world of fragility”. In essence, the Commission wants a shift from strategic planning to practical implementation. Last year's planning for the six overarching objectives is now to be given a concrete start, with the main focus on new legislative initiatives and the revision of existing legislation.

In the European Green Deal, the Commission will in particular review the relevant climate and energy legislation and adapt it to the recently proposed target of reducing emissions by at least 55 percent from 1990 levels by 2030. All this is to be done as part of a package called “Fit for 55 Package”, which will cover all sectors, including the transport sector with CO2 emission targets for cars, use of renewable energy and other relevant sectors.

The Commission will also propose a series of measures for sustainable and smart mobility, including a revision of the Trans-European Transport Network Regulation and the Intelligent Transport Systems Directive. The Sustainable and Intelligent Mobility Package includes the development of Post-Euro 6/VI emission standards for cars, vans, trucks and buses.

Furthermore, the Commission will propose a digital roadmap with clearly defined goals for 2030, such as for connectivity, skills and digital public services. The approach will follow clear principles: the right to privacy and connectivity, freedom of speech, free flow of data and cybersecurity. The Commission wants to take action across these different areas, notably with legislation covering the safety, liability, fundamental rights and data aspects of artificial intelligence and a Data Act to set the right conditions for better control and conditions for data sharing for citizens and businesses.

In the same spirit, the Commission will propose a new European digital identity to make it easier to do tasks and access services online across Europe and ensure people have greater control

and peace of mind over what data they share and how it is used.

Further Links:

- [Commission Work Programme 2021](#)

Public consultation: CO2 emissions from cars and vans

On 29 October 2020, the European Commission published a consultation on the first impact assessment of the regulation setting CO2 emission standards for cars and vans. The purpose of the consultation is to gather views, opinions and preferences on the range of issues and the options for shaping CO2 emission standards from relevant governmental and non-governmental actors from politics, administration, research, industry and interest groups.

The preliminary impact assessment concludes that, although CO2 vehicle standards have proven to be an effective policy instrument, without further political intervention, road transport emissions are not expected to decrease as much as they could in the past, so that the new 2030 target and the climate neutrality target for 2050 can be achieved. Achieving precisely these goals will require a greater use of zero-emission vehicles than currently projected. The current policy is not fully in line with the new climate targets and therefore does not provide a sufficiently long-term signal to channel the necessary investments in zero-emission vehicles and increase their market acceptance over time.

As a result, the innovative developments of the EU industry in the field of zero-emission technologies could progress more slowly than possible and compared to its international competitors, thereby jeopardizing the technological leadership and competitiveness of the EU automotive value chain. The production of more zero-emission models and their increased availability on the market is also the key to making zero-emission mobility more affordable and ensuring a fair transition.

The impact assessment sees a market failure and obstacle in particular in the fact that the costs of CO2 emissions to society are external costs that are not directly perceived by vehicle manufacturers and buyers and are therefore not necessarily taken into account in their production and purchasing decisions. Furthermore, experience shows that both manufacturers and end users tend to underestimate future fuel/energy savings. Consequently, it may not seem attractive for manufacturers to accelerate R&D and increase production output of more efficient vehicles, such as zero-emission vehicles, and for end-users to pay more for them. This also carries the risk that consumers will miss out on fuel/energy savings. Other market barriers are the cost and model availability of zero-emission vehicles and the availability and accessibility of the necessary charging/refilling infrastructure.

The impact assessment will examine a wide range of options on different elements of the CO2 emission standards regulation, including the degree of stringency of the CO2 emission targets for cars and vans, including options for setting new stricter targets and their timing; the specific mechanism to provide incentives and give preference to zero-emission and low-emission vehicles, including the type of mechanism and its elements and the type of vehicles to be targeted; the appropriateness of a new mechanism for taking into account the potential contribution of renewable and low-carbon fuels in determining whether manufacturers meet their targets, including the option of a voluntary crediting mechanism and in relation to other EU policies and measures for decarbonising fuels; the possibility of allocating potential revenues from fines to a specific fund or programme.

A preliminary assessment of the expected impacts includes both possible negative but also positive economic and social impacts: rising costs for producers and consumers; new jobs in new industries and business sectors; increased global competitiveness of the EU; better climate protection, etc.

According to the Commission, the impact assessment for this initiative should build on the

results of the impact assessment carried out in connection with the Communication on Reinforcing Europe's climate change objectives for 2030. The impact assessment will assess the economic, social and environmental impacts, including the corona pandemic and the post-pandemic phase. The consultation runs until 26 November 2020.

Further Links:

- [Public Consultation](#)

Parliament and Council: Climate law

On 6 October 2020, the European Parliament adopted its negotiating mandate for the EU climate change law. The new law aims to turn political promises that the EU will become carbon neutral by 2050 into a binding commitment and to give European citizens and businesses the legal certainty and predictability they need to plan for change.

MEPs insist that both the EU and all Member States must individually become climate neutral by 2050 and that the EU should then achieve "negative emissions". They also call for sufficient funding to achieve this.

The Commission must propose by 31 May 2023, through the ordinary decision-making procedure, a way forward at EU level to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, say MEPs. It must take into account the EU's total remaining greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 in order to limit the rise in temperature in line with the Paris agreement. The trajectory should be reviewed after each stocktaking at global level.

MEPs also want to establish an EU Climate Change Council (ECCC) as an independent scientific body to assess policy coherence and monitor progress.

The EU's current emission reduction target for 2030 is 40 percent compared to 1990, and the Commission has recently proposed raising this target to "at least 55Percent" in the amended proposal for EU climate change legislation. MEPs raised the bar even higher, calling for a 60 percent reduction in 2030, adding that national

targets should be increased in a cost-effective and fair way.

They also want an intermediate target for 2040, to be proposed by the Commission following an impact assessment to ensure that the EU is on track to meet its 2050 target.

Finally, the EU and Member States must also phase out all direct and indirect fossil fuel subsidies by 31 December 2025 at the latest, say MEPs, while stressing the need to continue efforts to tackle energy poverty.

The Parliament is now ready to start negotiations with the Member States as soon as the Council has agreed on a common position.

At its meeting on 23 October, the Council reached a partial general agreement on the proposed European Climate Change Act. The Council's position is partial because it does not yet contain an updated target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for 2030. Further work is needed to reach an agreement between the Member States in this respect.

The Council has modified the part of the original proposal that would have allowed the Commission to set a target path for achieving climate neutrality by means of delegated acts. Instead, the Council calls on the Commission to propose an interim target for 2040 after the first global stocktaking under the Paris Convention. The Council retains the concept of an indicative, linear target path; this is intended merely as a tool to assist the Commission in assessing progress.

Further Links:

- [Press Release: European Parliament](#)
- [Press Release: Council of the EU](#)

European Council: Climate target

On 15 October 2020, the European Council met and discussed the Corona crisis and the Brexit situation, as well as the Commission's Communication "More ambition for Europe's climate target for 2030", including the proposed target of reducing emissions by at least 55 percent by 2030 and the measures needed to achieve this level of ambition.

Recalling its previous conclusions, the European Council considers that the updated target should be met jointly by the EU in the most cost-effective way. All Member States will contribute to this effort, taking into account national circumstances and fairness and solidarity aspects. The European Council invites the Council to take work on this agenda forward. It invites the Commission to engage in in-depth consultations with Member States to assess the specific situation and to provide more information on the impact at Member State level.

It has decided to return to this issue at its December meeting in order to agree a new emission reduction target for 2030.

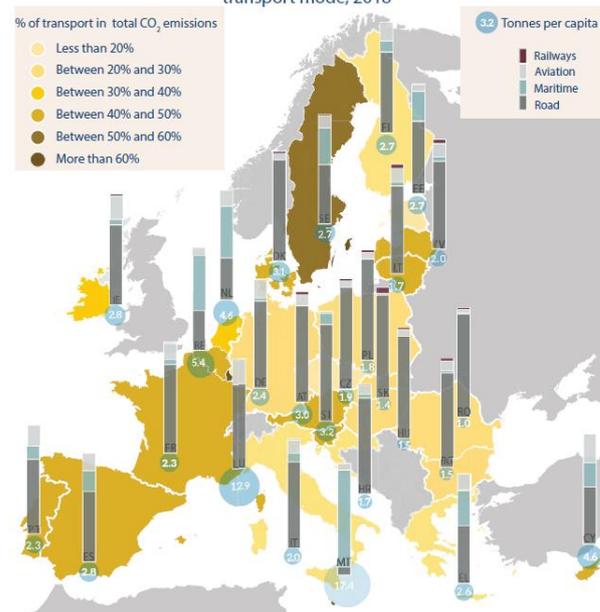
Further Links:

- [Press Release: European Council](#)

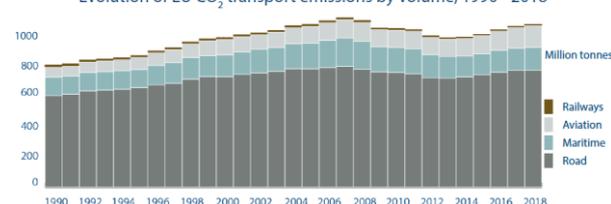
At a Glance: Transport CO2 emissions

On 7 October 2020, the European Parliament Think Tank published an infographic showing EU CO2 emissions from transport in focus.

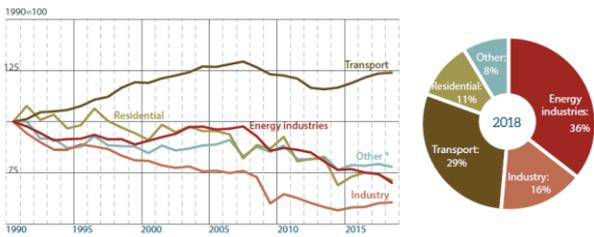
Per capita CO₂ emissions from transport, as share of total emissions and by transport mode, 2018



Evolution of EU CO₂ transport emissions by volume, 1990 - 2018



CO₂ emissions in the EU: 1990 - 2018 changes, and situation in 2018



Further Links:

- [Infographic](#)

Meeting Dates

Council

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council 07-08/12/2020

Competitiveness Council 19-20/11/2020

Council of Justice and Home Affairs 03/12/2020

Council of Environment 17/12/2020

Plenary 11-13/11/2020 (Agenda)

Committees

Environment (ENVI) 16/11/2020 (Agenda, tba)

Internal Market / Consumer (IMCO) 09/11/2020 (Agenda)

Justice & Home Affairs (LIBE) 09-10/10/2020 (Agenda)

Transport (TRAN) 10/11/2020 (Agenda)

EAC

(Hybrid) General Assembly 23/03/2021 in Berlin