

Off target

Ranking of EU countries' ambition
and progress in fighting climate change





Published in June 2018 by Climate Action Network Europe, Brussels, Belgium.

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CAN Europe gratefully acknowledges support from the European Commission and the Kann Rasmussen Foundation. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of CAN Europe and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of this publication is to examine which EU Member States are willing to increase their climate action and tackle the gap between the goals of the Paris Agreement and current greenhouse gas emission reduction efforts in the EU.

The ranking assesses both the role that Member States play in setting ambitious climate and energy targets and policies, and what progress they are making in reducing carbon emissions and promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency at home.

Adopting the Paris Agreement in 2015 and committing to pursue efforts to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C was a major step forward in safeguarding our planet's future. Yet the contributions proposed at the Paris talks are nowhere close enough to keep temperature rise below this threshold. Hence the EU, like all other countries in the world, needs to urgently and substantially increase its action, well beyond the currently agreed targets.



Results

The ranking shows that all EU countries are off target: they are failing to increase their climate action in line with the Paris Agreement goal. No single EU country is performing sufficiently in both ambition and progress in reducing carbon emissions. Countries can and must do more to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

For this reason, the top position of the ranking is unoccupied. Sweden comes out as leader of the pack, followed by Portugal, France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Aside from this group, a vast majority of Member States achieve a score of less than half of the possible points.

On the one hand, some countries score highly on 'ambition' due to their promotion of ambitious targets at EU level. Here, Sweden, Luxembourg and France score the most points. Unfortunately however, most countries that advocate for more ambitious policies for the future are currently lagging behind in achieving targets for 2020 and reducing carbon emissions.

On the other hand, some countries achieve a high score on 'progress' due to the fact that they are overachieving their 2020 climate and energy targets. Here, Croatia, Romania and Greece score the most points. However, countries that are on track to meet their current targets mostly do so because the targets were set too low and are easy to reach. These countries are opposing more ambitious policies for the future, because they want to keep on seeming to 'overachieve'.

THE GOOD

Sweden, Portugal, France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg recognise the importance of ensuring EU climate policy is 'Paris Agreement-proof', and call for EU climate ambition to be in line with the Paris Agreement. Also in the debate on the EU's future energy targets, these five countries have taken the lead. This group now needs to grow, align their calls more fully with the 1.5°C goal and back up their words with serious improvements in domestic policies.

THE BAD

The ranking shows that Belgium, Denmark, Germany and the UK are no longer at the forefront of the fight against climate change and aim rather low despite their relative wealth. So far they have remained silent or vague on the need to accelerate the zero-carbon transition in the EU.

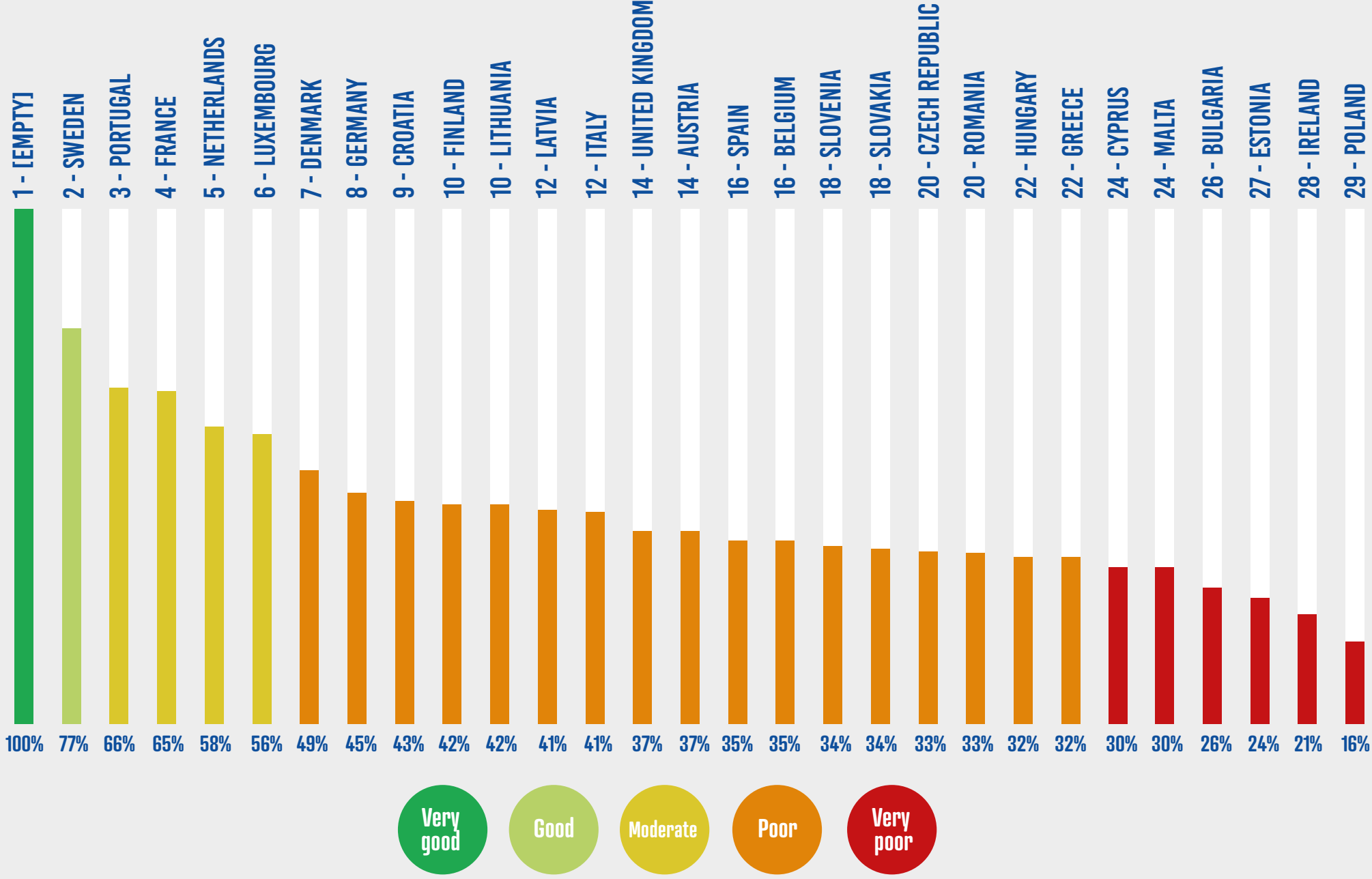
It is high time that other members of the so-called Green Growth Group, who in the past advocated for the transition to a green economy, such as Austria, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Slovenia and Spain speak out and act in favour of more ambitious climate and energy policies and targets, domestically and at EU level. The new governments of Italy and Spain especially are expected to improve their ranking in the near future by joining the push for more ambitious climate action (*).

THE UGLY

Most Central and Eastern European countries remain unambitious when it comes to climate policies. A few score highly in the ranking; firstly because, they will have received very low climate and energy targets due to their low average income, irrespective of their potential; and secondly, they often have low energy consumption and greenhouse gas emission numbers due to their economic situation. Slovenia and the Czech Republic can be considered to be more progressive voices in the region. Estonia, Ireland and Poland rank lowest because of their stiff opposition to climate action nationally and in the EU. These countries should be supporting stronger climate action because of the numerous co-benefits of speeding up the transition.

(*) This ranking applies to what Member State governments have been doing up until the end of May 2018, as for instance whether a country is on track to meet or miss its 2020 targets is not only influenced by the current government. Moreover, we have not been able to take into account recent changes in the governments of Italy, Spain and Slovenia. On the basis of the first indications of the positions of the new Spanish government in particular, a revision of the ranking would most likely lead to Spain moving up quite a number of places.

Where do EU countries stand on fighting climate change?



Key Country Recommendations

Indicators:



1. performance on a number of climate and energy indicators, such as per capita greenhouse gas emissions or share of renewable energy



2. being on track to achieve EU 2020 targets for renewables, energy savings and non-ETS emissions



3. setting domestic targets, beyond the targets set at EU level (related to emission cuts, renewables or coal phase out)



4. support for higher ambition in EU 2030 climate and energy legislation



5. support for more ambitious EU overall targets and strategies for 2030 or 2050

More information in the Methodology section.

Sweden - 2nd

70%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY INDICATORS

50%



PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION 2020 TARGETS

70%



DOMESTIC TARGETS ADDITIONAL TO EU TARGETS

89%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED AMBITION DURING NEGOTIATIONS ON REVISED LEGISLATION

83%



PROMOTION OF MORE AMBITIOUS EU TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Sweden is on the right track to meet its domestic climate and energy targets for 2020, and it has a high share of renewable energy in its energy mix. It has set domestic emission reduction targets beyond the EU requirements and is calling for more ambitious action at the EU level, including targets to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030 and to net zero by 2050 at the latest.

Lagging behind on

Sweden still has high energy consumption per capita. Meeting its 2030 domestic climate target is currently at risk, mainly due to high emissions in the transport sector.

Recommendations

- + Sweden needs to do more to tackle its high energy consumption per capita by investing in further energy saving measures.
- + Sweden needs to drastically reduce emissions in the transport sector.
- + In the run up to the national elections taking place in September this year, all political parties need to present ambitious climate plans, including on how to finance the achievement of the domestic climate targets.

Portugal - 3rd

65%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY INDICATORS

42%



PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION 2020 TARGETS

40%



DOMESTIC TARGETS ADDITIONAL TO EU TARGETS

78%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED AMBITION DURING NEGOTIATIONS ON REVISED LEGISLATION

75%



PROMOTION OF MORE AMBITIOUS EU TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Portugal is on track to meet its 2020 climate and energy targets and is making good progress in reducing emissions and energy consumption per capita. It has also adopted a plan to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 and called for such a target at EU level. It has been playing a positive role in the negotiations of the EU 2030 climate and energy policies, particularly by calling for a higher renewable energy target.

Lagging behind on

Portugal has relatively high coal consumption per capita, and in 2016 it still had a fairly low share of renewable energy in its energy mix. Recently, it has granted onshore and offshore permits for oil and gas exploration, ignoring negative environmental impacts and strong opposition from local authorities, citizens and NGOs.

Recommendations

- ✦ Portugal has committed to phase out coal by 2030, but coal consumption needs to be ended much sooner.
- ✦ A target to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 must be accompanied by concrete policies and measures for all sectors, including energy, transport, waste, agriculture and forests.
- ✦ Portugal needs to cancel all permits for oil and gas exploration.

France - 4th

60%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY INDICATORS

17%



PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION 2020 TARGETS

60%



DOMESTIC TARGETS ADDITIONAL TO EU TARGETS

83%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED AMBITION DURING NEGOTIATIONS ON REVISED LEGISLATION

83%



PROMOTION OF MORE AMBITIOUS EU TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

Delivering on

France has been advocating for more ambitious outcomes of the negotiations on the EU 2030 climate and energy policies. It has also called for higher climate ambition in the EU, including by advocating for a net zero emissions target by 2050.

Lagging behind on

France is lagging behind in reaching its 2020 climate and energy targets. It is likely to miss its 2020 renewable energy target, due to lack of investment in renewables and heavy dependence on nuclear energy. Progress in reducing energy consumption is also too slow. In 2016 emissions grew and exceeded the established cap, especially in the transport and building sectors.

Recommendations

- ✦ France needs to up its game on renewable energy and rapidly reduce nuclear power generation.
- ✦ In its national low-carbon strategy and legislation, France needs to put forward concrete plans for how to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.
- ✦ France also needs to tackle its high emissions from transport and agriculture, by prioritizing alternatives to road transport, stopping projects with high carbon emissions, and shifting to sustainable practices in the agriculture and food sectors.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Netherlands - 5th

45%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

25%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

60%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

72%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

75%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

The Netherlands has set an ambitious target of 49% emission cuts by 2030 at home, which will be raised to 55% if other EU Member States also increase their commitments. It has been advocating for more ambitious outcomes of the negotiations on the EU 2030 climate policies. It has also called for higher climate ambition in the EU, including for increasing the EU 2030 emission reduction target to 55%.

Lagging behind on

The Netherlands is lagging behind in reaching its renewable energy and energy efficiency targets for 2020. It has not always advocated for raising ambition in the negotiations on the EU renewables and energy efficiency targets and policies. It also has low share of renewable energy in its energy mix.

Recommendations

- ✦ The Netherlands should fulfill its domestic climate targets by investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency, instead of relying on uneconomic technologies such as carbon capture and storage.
- ✦ In order to achieve the domestic 2020 target of 25% emission reduction, in 2020 the Netherlands will have to close multiple coal power plants.
- ✦ The Netherlands needs to support the more ambitious European Parliament's position on the 2030 energy policies.

Luxembourg - 6th

40%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

25%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

20%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

89%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

83%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Luxembourg is on track to meet its 2020 energy efficiency target. It has been pushing for more ambitious outcomes of the negotiations on the EU 2030 climate and energy policies. It has also called for higher climate ambition in the EU, including by advocating for a net zero emissions target by 2050.

Lagging behind on

Luxembourg is lagging behind in reaching its 2020 climate and renewable energy targets. It is likely to miss its 2020 renewable energy target. It also has high emissions per capita, and high energy consumption per capita, mostly because of uncurbed emissions in the transport sector.

Recommendations

- ✦ Luxembourg must adopt additional measures to reduce emissions and increase the share of renewable energy.
- ✦ As an immediate step, Luxembourg needs to raise taxes on transport fuels. They are currently substantially lower than in neighbouring countries resulting in 'fuel export' abroad.
- ✦ Luxembourg needs to support the more ambitious European Parliament's position on the 2030 energy policies.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Denmark - 7th

65%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

25%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

40%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

67%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

25%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Denmark has declared that it will phase out coal by 2030 and all fossil fuels by 2050, but both deadlines are unambitious considering national circumstances.

Lagging behind on

Denmark has been failing to accelerate its energy transition. The government takes credit for decisions which merely recognize the ongoing energy shift. For example, the announcement of coal phase out by 2030 is only a confirmation of the fact that all remaining coal-fired plants have plans to stop using coal by 2030 anyway. Denmark has also so far failed to join the group of countries calling for higher EU climate ambition in line with the Paris Agreement.

Recommendations

- ✦ Denmark needs to commit to phase out all fossil fuels and achieve 100% renewables by 2040 at the latest. This should be complemented by a 95% emission reduction target, adequate short and mid-term targets and concrete measures and pathways to meet them.
- ✦ Denmark needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.
- ✦ Denmark needs to support the more ambitious European Parliament's position on the 2030 energy policies.

Germany - 8th

35%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

17%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

40%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

67%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

50%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Germany has called on a general level for higher climate ambition in the EU in line with the Paris Agreement. In the EU 2030 climate and energy policies negotiations, it has often served as a bridge and an advocate for more ambition among the usually less progressive Central and Eastern European countries.

Lagging behind on

Germany is likely to miss its 2020 targets, notably those for emission reductions and energy efficiency. Instead of proposing immediate remedies, Germany has postponed pressing decisions in the energy and transport sectors. In the negotiations on the EU climate and energy legislation Germany has often been hesitant about raising ambition. While progressive countries call for zero emissions in 2050 or earlier, Germany is still deciding whether it can support a goal of near emissions neutrality in 2050, as agreed upon in its own domestic 2050 long-term plan.

Recommendations

- ✦ Germany needs to adopt a Paris Agreement-compatible and clear coal phase out pathway and date.
- ✦ Germany needs to adopt a clear set of measures, both immediate and longer term ones, to accelerate the zero-carbon transition in the transport, energy, industry and agriculture sectors.
- ✦ Germany needs to support the more ambitious European Parliament's position on the 2030 energy policies and clearly commit to the fact that the EU 2030 climate target needs to be raised by early 2020.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Finland - 10th

40%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY INDICATORS

33%



PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION 2020 TARGETS

40%



DOMESTIC TARGETS ADDITIONAL TO EU TARGETS

39%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED AMBITION DURING NEGOTIATIONS ON REVISED LEGISLATION

50%



PROMOTION OF MORE AMBITIOUS EU TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Finland is on track to meet its climate and energy 2020 targets. Renewable energy is developing faster than expected. However, the majority is from bioenergy, which may increase forest logging in the future and is problematic for the climate. Finland has also called for higher climate ambition in the EU in line with the Paris Agreement.

Lagging behind on

Finland scores lowest among Nordic countries. It has a particularly negative stance on forest and land-based emission management. Finland plans to increase forest logging and thus dramatically reduce its carbon sink. At EU level, it lobbied hard to water down sustainability criteria for biomass, to hand out free pollution permits to industry and to damage the integrity of the EU Effort Sharing Regulation.

Recommendations

- ✦ Finland needs to limit forest harvesting and step up the 2030 emission reduction commitments without investing in technologies based on burning of biomass or peat and other fossil fuels.
- ✦ Finland needs to aim at a 100% sustainable renewable energy system with high energy efficiency and energy savings, and support a transition to local energy production and citizen energy to achieve that target as soon as possible.
- ✦ Climate action should be a priority for Finland's EU Council presidency and during the national and parliamentary elections in 2019.
- ✦ Finland needs to support the more ambitious European Parliament's position on the 2030 energy policies and clearly commit to the fact that the EU 2030 climate target needs to be raised.

Austria - 14th

60%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY INDICATORS

17%



PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION 2020 TARGETS

10%



DOMESTIC TARGETS ADDITIONAL TO EU TARGETS

50%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED AMBITION DURING NEGOTIATIONS ON REVISED LEGISLATION

8%



PROMOTION OF MORE AMBITIOUS EU TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Austria has been advocating for more ambitious outcomes of the negotiations on the Clean Energy Package, notably in relation to future legislation on renewable energy and market design. Domestically, Austria has adopted a target of 100% renewable electricity production by 2030. By that time, also 45-50% of all energy should come from renewable energy sources.

Lagging behind on

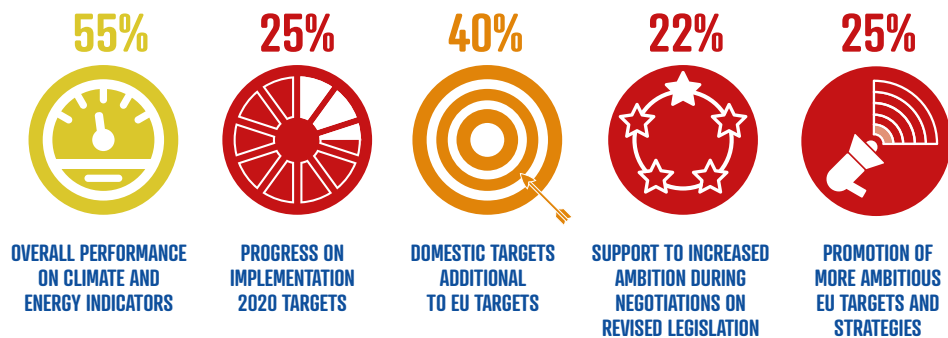
Austria is making little progress to reach its 2020 climate and energy targets and will likely miss its emission reduction target. The national energy strategy, proposed this year, is very vague and does not give confidence that the targets will be met. Austria still grants massive subsidies to fossil fuels. Furthermore, Austria has so far failed to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

Recommendations

- ✦ Austria needs to improve its national energy strategy, including outlining concrete steps for how to reach the set out goals (e.g. through ecological tax reform, subsidies for buildings' retrofit).
- ✦ Austria needs to phase out fossil fuel subsidies as soon as possible.
- ✦ Austria needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

United Kingdom - 14th



Delivering on

Domestically, the UK has committed to a number of ambitious climate targets which go beyond the collective commitments set at EU level. In particular, the UK has pledged to phase out coal by 2025 and fossil fuel cars and vans by 2040. It has also put in place a climate law to achieve at least 80% emission reduction by 2050 and increased financial support for developing countries.

Lagging behind on

During the negotiations on the EU climate and energy policies, the UK has been falling well short of being a force for progressive policy at EU level. The uncertainties surrounding the continuation and nature of the UK's relation with the EU environmental acquis after Brexit are also detrimental to the UK's credibility as a climate leader.

Recommendations

- ✦ The UK should take the opportunity of the 10th anniversary of its Climate Change Act to raise its emission reduction target to net zero before 2050 and to align the law with the Paris Agreement.
- ✦ The UK needs to establish clarity and guarantee integrity of its climate and energy framework post-Brexit.
- ✦ The UK needs to ensure that its long term strategy is aligned with the efforts required under the Paris Agreement, including follow its coal phase-out with plans for a gas phase-out.
- ✦ The UK needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition

Belgium - 16th



Delivering on

Belgium has been promoting timely development of the new EU long term climate strategy in line with the Paris Agreement. It has also been in favour of allocating more money for climate action in the future EU budget.

Lagging behind on

Belgium is likely going to miss its emission reduction target for 2020. Emissions have been rising since 2014, mainly in the transport and buildings sectors. Belgium is also likely to have difficulty reaching its 2020 renewable energy target. With four governments responsible for climate policy, it does not have a coherent strategy for reducing emissions. At EU level, Belgium has not been supporting higher ambition and contrary to its Benelux neighbours, it has remained silent on the need to revise the overall 2030 climate target.

Recommendations

- ✦ Belgium needs to put forward a clear vision on how to move towards a zero carbon society by 2050 at the latest.
- ✦ Belgium should improve internal cooperation on climate: Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels Region and the Federal Government should take their responsibility. Belgium needs to adopt additional and coherent measures to tackle the rising emissions.
- ✦ Belgium needs to up its game on renewable energy and energy efficiency. It should agree on a coherent energy action plan and implement the nuclear phase out agreed in 2003.
- ✦ Belgium needs to support the more ambitious European Parliament's position on the 2030 energy policies and join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Slovenia - 18th

40%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

42%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

0%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

39%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

25%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Slovenia is on track to meet its 2020 climate and energy targets, although this is largely due to the fact that those targets have been set at quite unambitious levels. Slovenia is among a handful of EU countries that have committed to phasing out fossil fuel cars after 2030.

Lagging behind on

There is recent concern about the achievement of the 2020 energy targets, notably the target for renewable energy. Slovenia has also so far failed to join the group of countries calling for higher EU climate ambition in line with the Paris Agreement, although it can be considered a more progressive force among Central and Eastern European countries.

Recommendations

- + Slovenia needs to put forward measures to ensure it will reach the 2020 renewables and energy efficiency targets.
- + Slovenia needs to develop and implement an ambitious long term strategy in line with the Paris Agreement.
- + Slovenia needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

The Czech Republic - 20th

35%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

58%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

10%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

39%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

0%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

The Czech Republic is on track to meet its 2020 climate and energy targets. It aims to reduce lignite consumption by 73% by 2040, which is a step in the right direction, but still not in line with the Paris Agreement. The same applies to the target to reduce emissions by at least 80% by 2050. The Czech Republic provides long-term support to energy efficiency measures in buildings.

Lagging behind on

The Czech Republic scores a low mark on domestic targets, mainly due to lack of plans to phase out coal. It is also not on track to meet its domestic target to decrease coal electricity production. It has so far also failed to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

Recommendations

- + The Czech Republic needs to adopt a coal phase out date, to put forward plans and measures to reduce emissions in the transport and agriculture sectors and to align all national policies with the Paris Agreement.
- + The Czech Republic needs to approve new renewable energy support schemes focusing on local and community projects, and to scale up and diversify investments in energy efficiency.
- + The Czech Republic needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Estonia - 27th

35%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

33%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

20%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

17%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

0%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Estonia is making some progress toward its 2020 climate and energy targets, notably the emission reduction target for the non-ETS sectors covering transport, agriculture, buildings, waste and small industry.

Lagging behind on

Estonia has relatively high emissions per capita, which is partly due to the high dependence on oil shale – a highly polluting fossil fuel - for energy production. Renewable energy development lacks proper sustainability criteria, which poses a threat to forests, as forest harvest rates are already high. Estonia is also likely to miss its energy efficiency target. Holding the EU Council presidency, Estonia failed to encourage climate ambition in EU climate and energy legislation. It has also failed to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

Recommendations

- + Estonia needs to develop a plan for oil shale phase out and the sustainable use of renewable energy sources.
- + Estonia needs to adopt additional measures to reduce its per capita emissions.
- + Estonia needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition.

Ireland - 28th

35%



OVERALL PERFORMANCE
ON CLIMATE AND
ENERGY INDICATORS

8%



PROGRESS ON
IMPLEMENTATION
2020 TARGETS

20%



DOMESTIC TARGETS
ADDITIONAL
TO EU TARGETS

22%



SUPPORT TO INCREASED
AMBITION DURING
NEGOTIATIONS ON
REVISED LEGISLATION

0%



PROMOTION OF
MORE AMBITIOUS
EU TARGETS AND
STRATEGIES

Delivering on

Ireland's Citizens' Assembly, a representative sample of Irish citizens, made strong recommendations to the Irish Parliament in 2017 to greatly enhance climate ambition. The Irish Government is now tasked with incorporating them into climate plans. In addition, the Irish electricity grid has an impressive potential of integrating high levels of renewables, especially wind power, which can still be further developed.

Lagging behind on

Ireland is set to miss its 2020 climate and renewable energy targets and is also off-course for its unambitious 2030 emissions target. Emissions from the transport and agriculture sectors are increasing significantly. Ireland has failed to prepare effective policies to align near-term climate action with EU and Paris Agreement commitments. Without new, immediate and substantive efforts to cut emissions, Ireland faces annual non-compliance costs of around €500 million. At EU level, Ireland failed to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition and played a negative role in the negotiations of the EU 2030 climate and energy legislation, pushing for loopholes to dilute the laws.

Recommendations

- + The Irish government needs to radically revise its National Mitigation Plan, currently subject to legal challenge, and immediately put in place measures in the transport and agriculture sectors.
- + All use of peat in electricity generation needs to end by 2019 and coal use by 2025.
- + The Irish government needs to implement the Citizens' Assembly proposals; this model of citizen-directed hearings with experts should also be promoted at international, regional and local levels.
- + Ireland needs to join the group of progressive EU Member States calling for increased EU climate ambition and deliver urgent, near-term emissions reductions.

KEY COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Methodology

The ranking looks, in an equal way, at:

- how countries perform in reaching their climate and energy targets and a set of climate and energy indicators;
- how countries behave in setting and increasing both European and domestic targets.

Performance is divided into two sets of indicators:

1. whether countries are **on track to achieve their EU 2020 targets** for renewables, energy savings and non-ETS emissions, as compared to their 2016 trajectories, and based on 2016 data of the European Environment Agency (Trends and Projections in Europe 2017. Tracking progress towards Europe's climate and energy targets).

For each of the three targets countries get points when they achieve or overachieve the 2016 trajectories, with higher points for higher levels of overachievement.

The total score for this section represents maximum 19% of the total score of the ranking.

2. how countries **perform overall** on a number of climate and energy indicators (based on 2015/2016 Eurostat data), such as:

- per capita greenhouse gas emissions;
- share of renewable energy;
- per capita final energy consumption;
- per capita coal consumption;
- percentage of European structural funding allocated to low-carbon development.

For each of the five indicators above, the better the performance, the higher scores were given.

The total score for this section represents maximum 31% of the total score of the ranking.

Setting and increasing targets is divided into three sets of indicators:

3. evaluating whether countries have set domestic targets, beyond the targets they have to fulfil at EU level, for:

- 2030 greenhouse gas emissions;
- 2050 greenhouse gas emissions;
- 2030 (or beyond) share of renewables;
- phase out of coal power plants.

For each of the four indicators above, based on available information from government and other sources, a score was given for those cases where an additional target is available, and a higher score when those targets were substantially above others.

The total score for this section represents maximum 10% of the total score of the ranking.

4. evaluating efforts of EU Member States to support higher ambition in different pieces of climate and energy legislation that have been recently approved or are in the process of approval:

- the revision of the Emission Trading Scheme Directive;
- the Effort Sharing Regulation;
- the Governance Regulation;
- the revision of the Renewable Energy Directive;
- the revision of the Energy Efficiency Directive;
- the revision of the Market Design legislation.

For each of the indicators above, European experts gave a score to countries depending on how they have supported higher ambition in the negotiations of each of the different pieces of legislation.

The total score for this section represents maximum 24% of the total score of the ranking.

5. evaluating support for more ambitious 2030/2050 EU climate and energy targets and policies:

- by publicly promoting the review and increase of the EU 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target;
- by publicly promoting the adoption of an EU net zero emissions target;
- by publicly promoting the timely development of an EU Long Terms Climate Strategy in line with the Paris Agreement;
- by promoting higher ambition in climate mainstreaming and climate proofing in the future EU budget.

For each of the indicators above, European experts gave a score to countries depending on how they have supported more ambitious climate targets and strategies in the European Union.

The total score for this section represents maximum 16% of the total score of the ranking.

Climate Action Network Europe is Europe's leading NGO coalition fighting dangerous climate change. With over 150 member organisations from 35 European countries, representing over 1.700 NGOs and more than 40 million citizens, CAN Europe promotes sustainable climate, energy and development policies throughout Europe.

CAN Europe is a regional node of Climate Action Network, a worldwide network of over 1100 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in more than 120 countries, working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels.

CAN members work to achieve this goal through information exchange and the coordinated development of NGO strategy on international, regional, and national climate issues.

CAN members place a high priority on both a healthy environment and development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Commission). CAN's vision is to protect the atmosphere while allowing for sustainable and equitable development worldwide.

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