



European Council Council of the European Union

European Council Conclusions on the Energy Union (19 March 2015)

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Energy union

1. The EU is committed to building an Energy Union with a forward-looking climate policy on the basis of the Commission's framework strategy, whose five dimensions are closely interrelated and mutually reinforcing (energy security, solidarity and trust; a fully integrated European energy market; energy efficiency contributing to moderation of demand; decarbonising the economy; and research, innovation and competitiveness). The EU institutions and the Member States will take work forward and the Council will report to the European Council before December. The European Council will continue to give guidance.
2. While emphasising the importance of all dimensions of the Energy Union, today, the European Council focused on some of the aspects and called for:
 - a) accelerating infrastructure projects, including interconnections in particular to peripheral regions, for electricity and gas ¹ to ensure energy security and a well-functioning internal energy market;
 - b) fully implementing and rigorously enforcing existing energy legislation;
 - c) reinforcing the legislative framework for the security of supply for electricity and gas; energy security can also be strengthened by robust grids, increased energy efficiency and having recourse to indigenous resources as well as safe and sustainable low carbon technologies;
 - d) ensuring full compliance with EU law of all agreements related to the buying of gas from external suppliers, notably by reinforcing transparency of such agreements and compatibility with EU energy security provisions. As regards commercial gas supply contracts, the confidentiality of commercially sensitive information needs to be guaranteed;

e) assessing options for voluntary demand aggregation mechanisms in full compliance with WTO and EU competition rules;

f) developing a more effective, flexible market design which should go together with enhanced regional cooperation, including with neighbouring countries, and help integrate renewables, while ensuring that public intervention is compatible with the internal market and that the right of Member States to decide on their own energy mix is respected. This will help provide affordable energy to households and industry;

g) reviewing and developing legislation related to emissions reduction, energy-efficiency and renewables to underpin the agreed 2030 targets; developing a reliable and transparent governance system;

h) developing an energy and climate-related technology and innovation strategy, including for example on the next generation of renewables, on electricity storage and carbon capture and storage, on improving energy efficiency in the housing sector as well as on sustainable transport;

i) using all external policy instruments to establish strategic energy partnerships with increasingly important producing and transit countries, notably with a view to promoting energy security, while ensuring that the sovereignty and sovereign rights of Member States to explore and develop their natural resources are safeguarded.

3. The European Council supports a strong coordinated action through an active European climate diplomacy ahead of the COP21 in Paris, in line with the ambitious objective fixed by the October 2014 European Council, as reflected in the contribution submitted recently by the EU and its Member States. It urges all Parties in a position to do so, including major economies, to submit their contributions by the end of March. It is also necessary to intensify work on solutions on financing, technology transfer and capacity-building, which are key issues in view of an ambitious agreement in Paris.

¹ The recent agreement by France, Portugal, Spain, the Commission and the EIB is a welcome step towards achieving the 10% electricity interconnections objective by 2020; the agreement by the Baltic States to proceed towards synchronous operation of Member States within the Continental European Network contributes also to the increase of energy security, as does the work of the Central East South Europe Gas Connectivity High Level Group. In this context, the setting up by the Commission of Regional High Level Groups composed by all relevant key players to ensure regular monitoring of progress in the selection and financing of Projects of Common Interest is encouraged.

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