



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 19.09.2022
C(2022) 6725 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings and Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency {COM(2022) 222 final}. The Commission welcomes the favourable assessment of the proposal and the support expressed by the Senát.

In May 2022, the Commission adopted the REPowerEU plan as a response to the global energy market disruption caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The REPowerEU plan aims at rapidly reducing the European Union's dependence on Russian fossil fuels by accelerating the transformation of Europe's energy system by several means including energy savings and energy efficiency, diversification of energy supplies, and the accelerated roll-out of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels in homes, industry and power generation.

One of the measures included in the REPowerEU plan is a new targeted proposal amending the Renewable Energy Directive, the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive to increase the overall renewable energy and energy efficiency targets for the European Union for 2030. It includes a Solar Rooftops Initiative with a phased-in legal obligation to install solar panels on public and commercial buildings and new residential buildings. The Commission adopted this proposal in an unprecedented context of urgency not only to achieve the increased climate target of at least 55% greenhouse gas emissions reduction, but also to ensure the European Union's energy security and independence from external threats.

The proposal includes an increase of the overall renewable energy target to 45% by 2030, to contribute to energy security and independence, as well as to competitive energy prices through an acceleration in the deployment of renewable energy, which is affordable, secure and sustainable. As regards energy efficiency, the structurally higher energy prices result in additional cost-effective energy efficiency potential in the European Union. Therefore, it is proposed to increase the 2030 European Union energy efficiency target from 9% to 13% compared to the Reference 2020 Scenario for 2030. If adopted, this proposal would reinforce

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our security of supply in a cheap, safe and clean way while contributing to the reduction of energy bills, making our economies more resilient and delivering on our climate objectives. To insure against a heightened risk of further gas supply disruption, the Commission proposed¹ on 20 July to coordinate the gas demand reduction measures setting a target for all Member States to reduce gas demand by 15% between 1 August 2022 and 31 March 2023. The implications for investment needs and additional costs of reducing the fossil fuel dependence from Russia to zero by 2027 have been published as part of the REPowerEU plan².

Lately, the costs of gas, oil and coal have increased significantly, and this trend may persist. These new developments underpin the rationale for accelerated deployment of renewables on a larger scale than planned before and for stronger energy efficiency measures. The Commission also observes that the European Union has exceeded its 2020 renewables target. Member States' plans for 2030 presented two years ago suggest that the European Union will again collectively achieve and even exceed the current target of 32% for 2030 set in the 2018 Renewable Energy Directive currently in force.

The proposal sets the overall objectives that Member States should achieve collectively, but it does not prescribe how to reach them. This ensures flexibility for Member States on how to achieve the proposed increased energy efficiency and renewable energy targets in the most cost-effective manner, adopting specific decarbonisation pathways tailored to their specific circumstances. The impact of the increased targets will depend on the solutions agreed during the legislative process. In addition, the current energy situation is very volatile, in particular with regard to a possible Russian gas supply disruption. Member States may implement national ad-hoc measures, which could have far-reaching impacts on national energy systems and which are difficult to anticipate. The Commission continues to stand ready to engage with Member States to discuss the impact of the proposed amendments.

The proposal also aims at accelerating the deployment of renewables. The Commission's proposal is based on ample evidence obtained through studies and stakeholder consultations. The feedback received points to the existence of significant barriers related to the length and complexity of permitting procedures, which need to be removed across the European Union if our objectives of the REPowerEU plan are to be met. By simplifying and speeding up those procedures, the proposal intends to facilitate the achievement of the 45% target. The Commission welcomes the Sénat's support for the acceleration and simplification of permitting processes for renewable energy projects and for the establishment of single contact points to guide the applicants through the entire administrative permit application.

As regards solar energy, the Commission agrees with the importance of the principle of technological neutrality. Through the adoption of the EU Solar Energy Strategy³, the Commission underlined the potential of this technology to provide a cost-effective solution to increase the share of renewable energy and decrease dependence on Russian fossil fuels. In addition, the strategy points out that solar energy technologies are the most accessible for

¹ COM(2022) 360 final and COM(2022) 361 final.

² SWD(2022) 230 final.

³ COM(2022) 221 final.

citizens and communities and can contribute to reduce their exposure to the volatility of fossil fuel prices. This requires a set of policies at both European Union and national level, including in the areas pointed out by the Senát: availability of the necessary skilled workforce, reduction of the exposure to supply chain disruptions, involvement of distribution system operators, development of a circular economy around solar energy products. The EU Solar Energy Strategy sets out a range of proposals to address each of these barriers.

The points made above are based on the initial proposal presented by the Commission, which is currently in the legislative process. The Senát's Opinion has been made available to the Commission's representatives in the negotiations of the co-legislators, the European Parliament and the Council, and will inform these discussions.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Senát and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Kadri Simson
Member of the Commission*