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INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Any other business
National Energy and Climate Plans – state of play
- Information from the Commission

In view of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council on 30 May 2024, delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Commission.

NATIONAL ENERGY AND CLIMATE PLANS - STATE OF PLAY

Information note from the European Commission

NECPs as a vehicle to reach the 2030 energy and climate objectives and targets

National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) are the main strategic planning tool in the Governance Regulation¹ and are key to provide the medium and **long-term predictability** that is key to trigger the **investments** necessary for the climate and energy transition. Member States agreed ambitious targets to reach by 2030: to collectively reduce energy consumption by **at least 11.7%** and to ensure that the share of energy from renewable sources in the Union's gross final consumption is **at least 42.5%**, with a collective endeavor to reach 45%. The update of the National Energy and Climate Plans is a crucial step to swiftly implement the Fit for 55 Package and deliver on the collective ambitions for 2030, while also strengthening Europe's industrial competitiveness.

Assessment of the draft updated National Energy and Climate Plans: a step towards 2030 ambitions

In its assessment of the draft updated NECPs,² the Commission confirmed that Member States' plans put the European Union in the right direction to meet these targets. However, based on the national contributions submitted the Commission identified an **ambition gap of up to 5.9³ percentage points** towards the 2030 **energy efficiency target**, and an **ambition gap of up to 3.2-3.9⁴ percentage points** towards the 2030 **renewable energy target** as well as other areas of improvement of the draft updated NECPs.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action (Governance Regulation).

² On 18 December for most Member States, 23 February for BE, IE and LV and 26 April for BG and PL. AT has not yet submitted a draft of its updated NECP.

³ In energy efficiency, the 2030 final energy consumption at Union level could reach 814.3 Mtoe, which would mean a reduction of 5.8% compared to the 2030 projections. This is lower than the 956 Mtoe final energy consumption level set in the 2018 EED but higher than the 763 Mtoe that would mean a reduction of 11.7%.

⁴ The share of renewable energy in final energy consumption could reach between 38.6% and 39.3% in 2030 at Union level.

In the case of **energy efficiency**, following the updated 2020 EU Reference Scenario, some Member States had notified updated indicative national contributions to the Commission before 1 February 2024 in accordance with Article 4(5) of Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency (recast) (EED recast). The assessment of all national contributions which have been notified so far confirms the **existence of a gap for energy efficiency of 2.9 percentage points**. Therefore, in March 2024, the Commission submitted a corrected indicative national energy efficiency contribution for final energy consumption (FEC) to Member States pursuant to Article 4 (5) EED recast. This provision requires Member States to use the corrected indicative national contribution communicated by the Commission as their indicative national contribution for FEC in their final updated NECPs.

In the case of renewable energy, the ambition gap remains as per the December 2023 Commission Communication⁵ given that there is not intermediary step between the submission of the draft updated NECPs and the final updated NECPs. The EU wide assessment was done on the basis of the figures of the 27 Member States as explained in Annex I of the Communication containing the methodology for the calculation of the EU wide ambition gap⁶.

Therefore, Member States are encouraged to step up efforts in terms of ambition both as regards energy efficiency and renewable energy to avoid any ambition gap in the final updated NECPs.

The 2023 EU wide assessment also revealed that Member States need to strengthen the draft NECPs across dimensions. In particular, as a lesson learnt from the crisis, **the dimension energy security** should be further underpinned with appropriate policies and measures to support the objective to phase out dependency from Russian fossil fuels as soon as possible. The Commission Guidance on the update of National Energy and Climate Plans offers specific guidance for updated NECPs to *increase energy security and affordability, towards a more resilient Energy Union*.

⁵ Commission's Communication on the EU wide assessment of the draft updated National Energy and Climate Plans: An important step towards the more ambitious 2030 energy and climate objectives under the European Green Deal and RePowerEU. COM/2023/796 final.

⁶ Annex I of Communication COM/2023/796 final details the methodology to calculate the Member State's ambition gap at Union level in the area of Renewable energy and energy efficiency. The assessment takes into account the 24 draft updated NECPs submitted as of beginning of December, and information submitted by Bulgaria and Poland via the EU pilot structured dialogue (Bulgaria and Poland's contribution for renewable energy, and Bulgaria's contribution for energy efficiency).

The Commission has been actively supporting Member States in finalising their updated NECPs by the end of June 2024 since the publication of the recommendations on the draft NECPs. To support the finalisation of the plans and their effective implementation, the Commission intensified bilateral contacts with Member States via dedicated technical meetings and high-level 'Roadshows' to the Member States. It also used relevant fora, such as the Energy Union Committee or the meetings of the Directors-Generals for Energy and Climate, to allow exchanges of best practices.

Next steps towards 2030: submission of the final updated NECP by 30 June 2024

Pursuant to Article 14 of the Governance Regulation, all Member States are due to submit their **final updated NECPs by 30 June 2024** taking into account the Commission's recommendations on their draft updated NECPs. The Commission will then assess the final updated NECPs as required by the Governance Regulation. The Commission's assessment might lead to proposing additional measures to ensure the collective achievement of objectives and targets in the event of insufficient ambition, as per Article 31 of the Governance Regulation.

The Commission calls on all Member State to submit final updated plans which are commensurate to the agreed level of ambition, underpinning them with the necessary policies and measures. Timely, robust and comprehensive plans will be absolutely decisive to collectively deliver on the Energy Union objectives and targets under the Fit for 55 package, the European Climate Law and the Union's contribution to the Paris Agreement. To this end, the Commission invites the Council to exchange around the main priorities identified by the Commission in its Communication on the EU wide assessment of draft updated NECPs and the country-specific assessment and recommendations as well as options to address remaining ambition gaps.