

Malabo europe renewable energy

The energy sector is responsible for more than 75% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing the share of renewable energy across the different sectors of the economy is therefore a key building block to reaching the goal of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and becoming a climate-neutral continent by 2050.

Building on the 20% target for 2020, the recast Renewable Energy Directive 2018/2001/EU established a new binding renewable energy target for the EU for 2030 of at least 32%, with a clause for a possible upwards revision by 2023.

On 18 May 2022, the Commission published the REPowerEU plan, which set out a series of measures to rapidly reduce the EU's dependence on Russian fossil fuels well before 2030 by accelerating the clean energy transition. The REPowerEU plan is based on three pillars: saving energy, producing clean energy and diversifying the EU's energy supplies. As part of its scaling up of renewable energy in power generation, industry, buildings and transport, the Commission proposed to increase the target in the directive to 45% by 2030.

To further accelerate the deployment of renewables, the Council adopted, following a Commission proposal of 9 November 2022, a temporary emergency regulation on 22 December 2022 to speed up permit-granting procedures for renewable projects and facilitate power purchase agreements.

The revised Renewable Energy Directive EU/2023/2413 raises the EU's binding renewable target for 2030 to a minimum of 42.5%, up from the previous 32% target, with the aspiration to reach 45%.

With its Energy 2020 strategy for competitive, sustainable and secure energy (COM/2010/0639), the EU aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%, increase the share of renewable energy to at least 20% of consumption and achieve energy savings of 20% or more by 2020. All EU countries should also achieve a 10% share of renewable energy in their transport sector. In their national renewable action plans, they explained how they intended to achieve these goals by 2020.

Every 2 years between 2001 and 2018, EU countries reported on their progress towards the EU's 2020 renewable energy goals and the Commission, based on the national reports and other available data, produced an EU-wide report, giving an overview of renewable energy policy developments in EU countries.

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In 2022, Sweden led among EU nations, with nearly two-thirds (66.0%) of its gross final energy consumption

derived from renewable sources, followed by Finland (47.9%), Latvia (43.3%), Denmark (41.6%), and Estonia (38.5%). Conversely, the EU members reporting the lowest renewable energy proportions included Ireland (13.1%), Malta (13.4%), Belgium (13.8%), and Luxembourg (14.4%), with 17 out of the 27 falling below the EU average of 23.0%.

The Maastricht Treaty signed in 1992 set an objective of promoting stable growth while protecting the environment. The Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 added the principle of sustainable development to the objectives of the EU. Since 1997, the EU has been working towards a renewable energy supply equivalent to 12% of the total EU's energy consumption by 2010.

In the European Conference for Renewable Energy in Berlin in 2004, the EU defined ambitious goals of its own. The conclusion was that by 2020, the EU would seek to obtain 20% of its total energy consumption requirements with renewable energy sources. Up until that point, the EU had only set targets up to 2010, and this proposal was the first to represent the EU's commitment up to 2020.

In 2009, the Renewables Directive set binding targets for all EU Member States, such that the EU will reach a 20% share of energy from renewable sources by 2020 and a 10% share of renewable energy specifically in the transport sector. By 2014, the EU realized a 16% share of energy from renewable sources with nine member states already achieving their 2020 goals. By 2018, this had risen to 18% with twelve member states meeting their 2020 targets early.

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