

EREF Press Release

Energy Council, 11 June 2018:

Member States will need to show their real intentions – creative courage or complacent blindness when it comes to the energy system change

Brussels, 8 June 2018

In the crucial debate to find a compromise on the Renewable Energy Directive Recast (RED II) and the new Governance Regulation under the European Trilogue, the Council is dragging its feet. A clearly forward looking European Parliament faces a divided Council, in which important Member States are only paying lip service to higher ambition.

This might change with the new political leadership in Spain. Recent press declarations show a forceful return to a constructive renewable energy policy from Madrid in close cooperation with the key rapporteur of the Renewables Directive, MEP José Blanco López.

The European energy and climate conscious citizens, energy cooperatives, active private consumers and industry are unclear about the final level of commitment of the Council.

The [European Renewable Energies Federation \(EREF\)](http://www.eref-europe.org) would like to remind the Council about the recent IRENA study *Renewable Energy Prospects for the European Union* from February 2018. This report was prepared in co-operation with the European Commission and found that the EU could cost effectively double the renewable share in its energy mix from 17% in 2015 to 34% in 2030.

“It is clear that a share of at least 35% as proposed by the European Parliament (EP) is the least the EU can do to keep temperature increases below 2°C and to achieve decarbonisation”, underlined António Sá da Costa, EREF President.

The intention of the Council to leverage the level of the EU binding target against other key aspects of the package is preposterous. It is especially worrying that the target is being leveraged against the rights or active consumers and sectoral goals.

EREF a federation of national renewable energy associations from EU Member States represents all renewable energy sectors at EU institutions. Its objective is to promote the interests of independent power, fuel and heat production from renewable sources and to establish non-discriminatory access to the European energy market. EREF strives to create, maintain and further develop stable and reliable framework conditions for renewable energy sources.

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EREF would like to emphasize the right of the renewable energy sector, EU citizens and the industry of the decision in favour of strong and binding minimum targets to be taken independently from other detail considerations and amendment discussions.

After the finalization of the discussions in June 2018, the European Union will be judged by what it gives to the world in terms of renewables' and energy efficiency ambition towards 2030. "35% will be the face-keeping minimum", said António Sá da Costa.

Ambition needs to be accompanied by detailed, clear and strong measures as foreseen in the proposals for the Renewable Energy Directive and Governance Regulation. They are necessary for citizens and industry to have planning and investment security. Removing burdensome administrative procedures as well as non-transparent costs will spur renewables' deployment.

The two Council proposals currently tabled, of an ambition level of 30-31% in exchange for minimal changes on the articles on self-consumption and on sectoral targets for the heating and cooling sector, or the slightly higher ambition level of 32-33% in exchange for the Parliament relinquishing its ambition, are both far away from the necessary changes required for the European system transformation.

Without significantly stronger targets and detailed policy measures underpinned by a meaningful governance framework, the development of the new Guidelines for State Aid for Energy and Environment will start with a strong handicap for the European decision-making process and the renewable energy industry.

Furthermore, Member States willing to proceed with an ambitious energy system change towards renewables and energy efficiency will face even more hurdles in finding acceptable pathways for a just transition – especially for those regions still depending on nuclear and fossil fuels.

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