



E3G

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For immediate release

Ukraine crisis pushes energy cooperation up Europe's agenda

In response to EU Council discussions of the EU's 2030 climate and energy package today, E3G Chief Executive Nick Mabey said,

"It is clear that European Leaders will eventually agree the proposed 40% domestic greenhouse gas reduction target. Delaying a decision from June to October means the EU risks becoming increasingly irrelevant in shaping international climate negotiations."

Mabey continued,

"The Ukraine crisis has concentrated Leaders' minds on the benefits of European cooperation. The unexpectedly strong "energy solidarity" clause to reduce gas import dependence will drive more investment in energy efficiency, EU grids and renewables. This will increase security, be good for the climate and support future competitiveness."

At the Council meeting, 28 EU leaders discussed next steps for agreement of a 2030 climate and energy framework, based on the proposals put forward by the European Commission at the end of January. The Council has now called for the European Commission to conduct further analysis and discussions with Member States before stock-taking in June, with a decision on the key elements of the package no later than October.

The Council has also tasked the Commission with preparing a comprehensive plan for reducing the EU's energy dependence by June 2014, ensuring that increasing energy efficiency and interconnection form a central part of that plan.

E3G Associate Director Ingrid Holmes said,

"We are pleased to see the European Council prioritising energy efficiency as the "first step" towards reducing Europe's high gas dependency. It is no coincidence that the European Member States most dependent upon Russian gas are among its least energy efficient. Delivering on energy security in this way also opens the door to more ambition on tackling climate change."

Mabey added,

“The 2030 process has focused too much on exaggerated fears around competitiveness, and too little on driving growth and innovation in the real European economy. Member States are clearly frustrated with the Brussels institutions’ failure to put forward a comprehensive package, and have reacted by asking for additional action in many areas.”

Mabey concluded,

“There is a strong feeling that Herman van Rompuy ignored the Green Growth Group ministers of thirteen countries who called for a strong decision in March. He must ensure June’s Council meeting delivers a clear decision on the headline elements of the 2030 package to avoid undermining the EU’s influence in shaping the Paris 2015 climate deal.”

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