
Europe's 2040 climate ambition should build more on renewables, electrification and circularity

Press statement

Agora Energiewende and Agora Industry welcome the European Commission's recommendation for a 90 percent emission reduction target for 2040 as an important waypoint in the transition to climate neutrality. However, the think tanks call for more attention to rapid scaling of renewable energy deployment, electrification particularly of industrial heat, and circular economy as cost-effective and reliable ways to accelerate emission reductions.

Brussels | Berlin, 6. February 2024. Today, the European Commission published a communication on the EU's 2040 climate target, recommending that the EU aims for at least 90 percent emission cuts by 2040.

Matthias Buck, Director Europe at Agora Energiewende said:

"The recommended 90 percent target is a welcome signal and an important waypoint in Europe's transition to climate neutrality, and it will provide investment certainty to companies and individuals. The Commission however puts too much emphasis on technologies such as carbon capture and storage and too little on the readily available and cost-effective solutions such as accelerating renewable energy deployment, direct electrification of end-uses and circular economy. It will now be crucial to focus the debate on how Europe can successfully cut emissions by 90 percent over the next 15 years while strengthening solidarity, competitiveness and sovereignty."

Frank Peter, Director Agora Industry said:

"Carbon capture and storage technologies will ultimately be needed to achieve net zero, but they will not be scaled quickly and come at a significant cost. Our research shows that while CCS-technologies are necessary in the industry and waste management sectors, they will have no role in the power sector. It therefore makes economic sense for Europe to accelerate electrification of industrial heat as well as prioritise circular economy strategies wherever possible to eliminate the use of fossil fuels and thus reduce the need for CCS."

In addition to the climate neutrality 2050 goal, the EU Climate Law obliges the European Commission to propose an emissions reduction target for 2040. While the current Commission has now outlined possible scenarios for 2040 and its recommendation for a 90 percent target, the next Commission will be responsible for proposing the target itself.

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➔ **About Agora Energiewende and Agora Industry:**

Agora Energiewende and Agora Industry develop scientifically sound and politically feasible strategies for a successful pathway to climate neutrality – in Germany, Europe and internationally. The organisations which are part of the Agora Think Tanks work independently of economic and partisan interests. Their only commitment is to climate action.