

EUROPEAN UNION COMMITTEE
Energy and Environment Sub-Committee

EU ENERGY GOVERNANCE

Call for Evidence

The House of Lords EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee is conducting an inquiry into *EU Energy Governance*. The Sub-Committee seeks evidence from anyone with an interest.

Written evidence is sought by 2 October 2015. A seminar and evidence session will be held during October 2015. The Committee aims to report to the House, with recommendations, by December 2015. The report will receive responses from the Government and the European Commission, and may be debated in the House.

EU energy governance relates to how the EU institutions and Member States interact, both formally and informally, in order to realise the energy policy objectives of the EU on the one hand and fulfil national aims on the other.

The October 2014 European Council set out a number of principles underpinning climate and energy governance. This should be “a reliable and transparent” system “without any unnecessary administrative burden [...] to help ensure that the EU meets its energy policy goals, with the necessary flexibility for Member States and fully respecting their freedom to determine their energy mix.”

The 8 June 2015 Energy Council subsequently invited the European Commission to “rapidly present initiatives on the governance system of the Energy Union [...], including guidelines on regional cooperation”. These should “be developed swiftly [...] and reported to the European Council in December 2015 as a first step to develop the governance system.”

At the heart of this debate, we see potential tensions between EU and national objectives. Our aim is to bring these tensions to wider attention than has been the case thus far and to scrutinise the progress of work. On the basis of our evidence, we hope to make a constructive contribution to the debate that will take place at the December European Council and beyond. We will make policy recommendations to the Commission and Member States, including the UK, accordingly.

The Sub-Committee will approach the issue of governance through the lens of two case studies, which illustrate the tensions: capacity mechanisms and renewable energy targets. These will allow the Committee to explore the topic in the context of national energy security on the one hand and national energy mix on the other.

We seek evidence on any aspect of the topic of EU energy governance, and particularly on the following questions:

Case Study One (national energy security): Capacity Mechanisms

1. Capacity mechanisms are being introduced by some Member States in order to assure national security of supply.
 - How might the development of some form of governance system mitigate any impact of separate national capacity mechanisms on the EU's energy policy?
 - How far can co-ordination of such mechanisms go before it becomes politically unacceptable?
 - How has this tension between EU and national objectives been handled thus far?

Case Study Two (national energy mix): Renewable energy targets

2. The October 2014 European Council agreed that the EU should cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030 compared to 1990 and that this should be delivered through a range of measures including renewable energy: "An EU target of at least 27% is set for the share of renewable energy consumed in the EU in 2030. This target will be binding at EU level." This contrasts to the 20% renewable target by 2020 which has binding national targets for each Member State.
 - How could a governance mechanism assist the EU to deliver its stated policy, including not only the 27% renewables target but the overarching 40% emissions reduction target which relies in part on the renewables target?
 - How robust could a governance mechanism be without compromising Member State responsibility for their national energy mix?

Drawing the case studies together: Looking forward

3. What are the implications of a strengthened EU approach to energy governance? What are the implications of not making swift progress towards a new – and clear – governance system?
4. If National Energy and Climate Plans were to be the basis for a strengthened governance, who should be responsible for assessment, review and enforcement? How can transparency of that process be assured?
5. What role should regional co-operation play in any new governance system? How can regional co-operation help to overcome the potential tensions between national and EU policy objectives?
6. Should a new governance framework be enshrined in legislation?

You need not address all these questions in your response.

GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Written evidence should be submitted online using the written submission form available at www.parliament.uk/eu-energy-governance-written-submission-form. This page also provides guidance on submitting evidence. The deadline for submissions is Friday 2 October.

Short submissions are preferred. A submission longer than six pages should include a one-page summary. Paragraphs should be numbered. All submissions made through the written submission form will be acknowledged automatically by email.

Evidence which is accepted by the Committee may be published online at any stage; when it is so published it becomes subject to parliamentary copyright and is protected by parliamentary privilege. Submissions which have been previously published will not be accepted as evidence. Once you have received acknowledgement that the evidence has been accepted you will receive a further email, and at this point you may publicise or publish your evidence yourself. In doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee, and you should be aware that your publication or re-publication of your evidence may not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

Personal contact details will be removed from evidence before publication, but will be retained by the Committee Office and used for specific purposes relating to the Committee's work, to seek additional information for example.

Persons who submit written evidence, and others, may be invited to give oral evidence. Oral evidence is usually given in public at Westminster and broadcast online; transcripts are also taken and published online. Persons invited to give oral evidence will be notified separately of the procedure to be followed and the topics likely to be discussed.

Substantive communications to the Committee about the inquiry should be addressed through the Clerk of the Committee, whether or not they are intended to constitute formal evidence to the Committee.

This is a public call for evidence. Please bring it to the attention of other groups and individuals who may not have received a direct copy.

You may follow the progress of the inquiry at www.parliament.uk/eu-energy-governance.