



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2014/2153(INI)

30.3.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on European Energy Security Strategy
(2014/2153(INI))

Rapporteur: Merja Kyllönen

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Considers that the current global energy and climate challenges require effective, equitable and common actions by the European Union on the international stage;
2. Considers that the challenges posed by energy security and climate change need to be met by a unified strategy addressing both issues simultaneously; stresses that combining measures to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy and to develop innovative energy technologies is of crucial importance in order to achieve an environmentally sustainable energy mix and to secure stable energy supply throughout Europe at affordable prices for both citizens and enterprises, as essential dimensions of energy security;
3. Welcomes, therefore, the commitment to greater cooperation in energy policy; emphasises the importance of including investments in energy efficiency across the EU in any energy security plans and of promoting investments in indigenous renewable energy sources;
4. Stresses that climate change, uncompetitive energy prices and an extremely high level of dependence on unreliable third-country suppliers are threatening the sustainability of Europe's energy system;
5. Takes the view that the EU's increasing import dependence on fossil fuels from largely unreliable third-country suppliers is making the EU vulnerable and deeply undermining the development of a credible, effective and consistent common European energy policy;
6. Points out that improved energy security can be achieved in a cost-efficient manner if addressed cooperatively among Member States; stresses, in this connection, the important role that a properly interconnected and functional market for electricity and gas can play in diversifying suppliers, sources and routes in Europe;
7. Calls on the Commission to adopt a more proactive approach to ensuring Member States' compliance with European legislation aimed at establishing transparent and well-functioning energy markets;
8. Highlights the importance of coordinating national energy policies and strengthening the EU's voice in the field of external energy policy;
9. Points out that increasing energy security is mutually linked to the need to move to an efficient low-carbon economy; strongly calls on the Commission, therefore, to bring forward ambitious 2030 targets and to put in place a comprehensive EU energy and climate strategy based on the objective of decarbonising the EU economy, starting from the Commission's communication and taking into account Parliament's resolution of 15 March 2012 on a Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050¹;

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0086.

10. Stresses the significant co-benefits to the climate, air quality, public health and the environment from improving energy security through increased energy efficiency and a switch to renewable energies such as wind, solar and geothermal;
11. Considers the energy efficiency legislation and the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) to be mutually supportive instruments, and calls for the prompt implementation of a Market Stability Reserve able to ensure a carbon price signal that can drive improvements in energy efficiency in the ETS sector; calls on the Commission to complement the ETS with an emissions performance standard that provides a clear investment signal for the phasing-out of the most polluting forms of power generation, such as those based on coal;
12. Strongly calls for the elimination of the EU's 'energy islands', which was initially scheduled to be completed in 2015; maintains, accordingly, that developing energy interconnections in order to end the isolation of any Member State is a must; emphasises the need to accelerate the implementation of strategic infrastructure projects, especially those designed to put an end to a Member State's energy isolation, and to promote the use of renewables by facilitating their distribution; urges the Commission, in this connection, to give high priority to EU funding instruments for interconnectivity projects aimed at completing the EU internal energy market;
13. Stresses that action towards the necessary substantial changes to the EU's energy system will only follow if measures are put forward in conjunction with the Member States, taking into account their capabilities; calls on the Commission to propose concrete steps and action plans, including legislation, for both the short and long term; calls for strong investment by the EU and its Member States in energy research and innovation leading to environmentally sustainable, innovative energy technologies; underlines the need for education, training and the sharing of best practices, and for local pilot projects in Member States which contribute to energy security by improving the resilience of local systems;
14. Recalls its previous positions on setting ambitious, nationally binding goals for renewables and energy efficiency, which ought to reduce dependence on imported energy;
15. Maintains that energy saving and energy efficiency are fast and cost-effective routes to addressing issues such as energy security, external dependence, high prices, unemployment and environmental concerns; underlines the potential for both energy saving and energy efficiency, in particular in specific sectors such as buildings and transport; points out the role of district heating and cooling in managing energy demand; highlights the fact that, according to the International Energy Agency, energy efficiency is the world's 'first fuel' by virtue of it having the lowest cost and of its availability and sustainability; emphasises the need for EU and national policies to promote investments in energy efficiency and demand-side solutions, as these will bring significant long-term gains for European security of supply; calls on the Commission, therefore, to set clear targets for the renovation of building stock across the EU, which will also lead to new jobs and rejuvenate the EU economy;
16. Is convinced that the promotion of a circular economy and greater resource efficiency can lead to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, thereby making a vital contribution to meeting climate and energy challenges;

17. Calls on the Commission, as a priority, to adopt measures to increase energy efficiency, thus also tackling the problem of low competitiveness resulting from high energy prices;
18. Points out the importance of fully implementing the EU's legislative framework for energy efficiency in order to achieve an energy saving of 20 % by 2020, of further developing the Energy Efficiency Directive, the Ecodesign Directive, the Ecolabelling Directive and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, and of allocating increased EU funding to these areas; calls on the Commission to monitor closely the implementation of these directives in the Member States; emphasises that, as part of the revision of these directives, energy poverty should be elevated to priority status and measures should focus on social housing and on the most inefficient properties occupied by low-income households;
19. Recognises that decreased emissions governed by an Emissions Performance Standard correlate directly with energy efficiency and long-term savings in the energy sector;
20. Recalls that the article on energy efficiency obligation schemes in the Energy Efficiency Directive is the key measure for meeting the 2020 energy efficiency target; urges the Commission to extend this provision beyond 2020 while removing the exemptions that diminish its effectiveness;
21. Calls on the Commission to raise the ambition level of energy efficiency performance standards for products, including new ones in the expected Ecodesign Working Plan 2015-2017, and to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of information schemes concerning the energy consumption of appliances in order to help deliver the full economic potential of energy savings for households and businesses and to contribute to Europe's energy security and long-term decarbonisation goals;
22. Takes the view that clear, binding 2030 targets for climate and energy, together with an ambitious action plan and an effective governance structure implemented through European legislation, will also serve energy security; stresses that a long-term perspective is vital for creating a stable framework for the necessary investments in European energy infrastructure, and that it is therefore important that a legislative framework for climate and energy for the 2020-2030 period be put in place without delay; calls on the Commission, therefore, to bring forward all the necessary proposals as soon as possible, on the basis of the normal legislative procedure;
23. Reiterates that research and innovation are key to the development of environmentally sustainable, innovative energy technologies and are vital in order to make the already available indigenous renewable energy technologies more affordable and competitive; urges, therefore, more EU support for R&D&I;
24. Emphasises that regulatory certainty based on a clear political direction is essential in order to provide EU citizens and businesses with secure, sustainable and affordable energy; recalls, in this connection, that Parliament has called for a binding EU 2030 target of reducing domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 % compared with 1990 levels, a binding EU 2030 energy efficiency target of 40 %, and a binding EU 2030 target of producing at least 30 % of total final energy consumption from renewable energy sources;

25. Calls on the Commission to step up the development and deployment of low-carbon technologies and to strengthen the role of renewable energy sources in order to further ensure diversification of energy supplies and save on fuel imports;
26. Calls on the Commission to develop a support framework for advancing renewable energies which will ensure international competitiveness, and to make proposals for at least 30 % renewable energy in the EU by 2030, maintaining the rate of increase in installed renewable energy at the current level while recognising that Member States have different capacities for generating and exploiting these sources;
27. Welcomes the Commission's view of renewable energies as a no-regrets option, in conjunction with energy efficiency and energy infrastructure, as affirmed in the Energy Roadmap 2050 and endorsed by Parliament, and stresses the importance of developing smarter energy grids and new flexible, distributed and micro-level energy production and storage solutions; acknowledges, in this context, that the use of natural gas in the power generation, heating and transport sectors could contribute to an effective transition towards a completely decarbonised EU energy mix;
28. Points out that the EU is currently a global leader in renewable energy technology, with around half a million jobs already having been created in this sector; whereas higher shares of renewables will result in longer-term growth and increased energy security;
29. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to deliver investment in energy research and innovation through the Horizon 2020 programme;
30. Points to hydropower as a major indigenous and renewable energy source which will continue to play a crucial role in electricity generation and storage in Europe;
31. Points out that sustainable agriculture and forestry are important tools for contributing to biomass energy production and achieving energy efficiency;
32. Calls on the Commission to recognise the value of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies, which can play an important role as part of the suite of solutions for reducing carbon emissions in Europe;
33. Calls on the Commission to incentivise and finance the switch to renewable technologies and to maintain the financing of CCS technologies through innovation funds such as NER300 and NER400;
34. Notes that it is essential that investments in energy transmission match the pace of investments in renewable and other sources of energy; stresses that a successful transition to a sustainable low-carbon economy requires additional interconnections that will facilitate cross-border trade and increase EU balancing capacity, thereby resulting in more cost-effective integration of renewable energy sources;
35. Emphasises that the expansion and upgrading of interconnections in southern European countries could contribute to the further uptake of renewables and to energy security in the region, and also catalyse the integration of the region's energy markets with the rest of the EU and enhance the security of energy supply;

36. Considers that the persistence of energy-isolated geographical regions is in clear contradiction with the EU's goal of energy security; stresses, in this context, the need to set binding and time-framed minimum cross-border interconnection capacity targets; urges the Commission to put in place adequate monitoring measures to ensure their timely achievement;
37. Stresses that a high level of environmental protection must be ensured in the context of considering energy security; recalls, in this connection, the environmental, climate and health risks and impacts related to the extraction of unconventional fossil fuels;
38. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to redesign subsidy mechanisms in order to facilitate the integration of the energy market and phase out all environmentally harmful subsidies, in particular for fossil fuels, and to make full use of funds for financing sustainable renewable energy sources which are not yet cost-competitive with conventional energy sources, on the basis, inter alia, of binding renewable targets agreed at EU level;
39. Reiterates the need to take immediate action in the transport sector, in terms of both efficiency improvements and decarbonisation, with a view to reducing the sector's import dependence and total climate impact; calls for effective measures as part of a comprehensive and sustainable approach aimed at promoting emissions reduction, energy efficiency, the development of alternative fuels and the electrification of the transport sector;
40. Considers that the use of liquefied natural gas as a cleaner transitional fuel should be encouraged for heavy load vehicles and in the maritime sector;
41. Considers that in the housing sector deep renovation for energy efficiency and the promotion of zero-emission buildings should be a priority.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	26.3.2015
Result of final vote	+: 57 -: 10 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Margrete Auken, Zoltán Balczó, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Nessa Childers, Alberto Cirio, Birgit Collin-Langen, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Ian Duncan, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, Eleonora Evi, José Inácio Faria, Karl-Heinz Florenz, Iratxe García Pérez, Elisabetta Gardini, Jens Gieseke, Sylvie Goddyn, Matthias Groote, Andrzej Grzyb, Jytte Guteland, György Hölvényi, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Jean-François Jalkh, Benedek Jávor, Karin Kadenbach, Kateřina Konečná, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Valentinas Mazuronis, Susanne Melior, Massimo Paolucci, Gilles Pargneaux, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, Pavel Poc, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Renate Sommer, Dubravka Šuica, Tibor Szanyi, Nils Torvalds, Glenis Willmott, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Damiano Zoffoli
Substitutes present for the final vote	Nicola Caputo, Herbert Dorfmann, Linnéa Engström, Luke Ming Flanagan, Jan Huitema, Karol Karski, Elisabeth Köstinger, Merja Kyllönen, Anne-Marie Mineur, Alessandra Mussolini, James Nicholson, Marit Paulsen, Bart Staes, Theodor Dumitru Stolojan, Tom Vandenkendelaere
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Marie-Christine Boutonnet, Anthea McIntyre, Emilian Pavel