

Clean energy innovation needs a change of mind-set

- Citizens should be agents of change, not subject to it
- Coherent and stable EU financing and programming
- EU should keep and strengthen its position as global leader

Boosting energy innovation requires citizens' active participation and a long-term vision on how to allocate resources, said MEPs in their vote on Tuesday.

The plenary adopted a series of non-legislative recommendations drafted by the energy committee (ITRE) to "advance clean energy innovation", by 559 votes to 63 and 43 abstentions.

Citizens as active actors in the energy transition

Systemic education and engagement schemes are needed to help European citizens change their mind-set and understand how they can innovate and use digital tools to produce, consume, and preserve more sustainable and cleaner energy, highlighted MEPs. Market entry barriers should be lowered to make it easier for citizens to participate, and openness, transparency, and fair competition should be ensured, they further said.

Coherent and stable long-term financing and programming

The next research and development budget should increase overall by at least €120 billion, MEPs urged again, with an increase of at least 50% for financing low-emission energy projects, and support for initiatives that involve cities and local administrations. MEPs also added that public procurement can be a driver for innovation, as well as an incentive for more sustainable growth. They underlined that both loans and grants should be equally available to investors. It should also be easier for investors to see what type of funding is available and how they can access it when they want to invest in energy projects.

EU global leadership

The EU should explore different ways to assist developing countries and emerging economies in their energy transitions, and should design an export strategy for sustainable, clean energy technologies and solutions for itself, while making the patent registration procedures at the European and national level easier and more accessible.

This non-binding report was drafted following the Commission's Communication on "Accelerating Clean Energy Innovation", which is part of the [Clean Energy Package](#) launched by the European Commission in November 2016, crucial for completing the [Energy Union](#), one of the key priorities of the Juncker Commission.

The [2017 Global Cleantech Innovation Index](#) ranks five EU countries among the top 10 on emerging clean technology innovations. Eleven EU member states are in the top 20, and twenty are in the top 40 worldwide.

Quote

Jerzy Buzek (EPP, PL), rapporteur, said: "Energy is the bloodstream of the modern economy. It is crucial for the EU to become a true global leader in energy innovation. We need to simplify EU programmes and funds, so that researchers and investors can use them more efficiently. We need more national expenditure to be better coordinated in infrastructure, research, and structural funds; and we need to apply a technology-neutral approach."

Further information

[Adopted text \(17.01.2018\)](#)

[Video recording of the debate \(15.01.2018\)](#)

[Press release on committee vote \(11.01.2018\)](#)

[Draft reports, amendments and voting lists](#)

[Procedure file - Accelerating clean energy innovation](#)

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