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STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION - SYNOPSIS REPORT

Synopsis report on the results of the 2030 Climate Target Plan consultation activities

Accompanying the document

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Stepping up Europe's 2030 climate ambition

Investing in a climate-neutral future for the benefit of our people

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Synopsis report on the results of the 2030 Climate Target Plan consultation activities

1. Introduction

In the context of the European Green Deal aiming to make Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent, the Commission carried out consultation activities on the plan to increase the EU 2030 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction target[1]. The Inception Impact Assessment for the 2030 Climate Target Plan was open for feedback **from 18 March 2020 - 15 April 2020.** An open public consultation was conducted through an online survey. The survey was open for 12 weeks (**from March 31st to June 23rd, 2020).** The Commission asked a contractor[2] to produce a report analysing the results of the online survey, including the submitted position papers. The results are included in this report. Workshops and *ad hoc* stakeholder meetings, originally envisaged, did not take place due to COVID-19 safety measures.

2. Inception Impact Assessment

The Commission received 1 095 replies that vary in terms of geographical distribution, type of respondents, size of contributing organizations and topics covered. The biggest number of replies came from **citizens**, mostly originating from the EU (712 out of 772 citizen replies). The remaining replies came from different **organizations**, mostly from the **business sector** (174 replies), **NGOs and environmental organizations** (101 replies), **academic institutions** (19 replies) and **public authorities** (13 replies).

The great majority of the replies give strong support to the revised cut in emissions proposed by the Green Deal (a reduction of 50-55% of Europe's GHG emissions by 2030) or suggest going even further in reductions.

Among the **particular areas of focus** highlighted are just transition; energy efficiency; adequate financing tools and investment; climate justice and solidarity; divestment from fossil fuels; renewable energy; carbon capture usage and storage (CCUS); carbon leakage; the role of science and the carbon budget; decoupling of economic growth from resource use, etc. **COVID-19** is a topic that was mentioned by several of the contributors.

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[1] The details of the public consultation can be consulted at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12265-2030-Climate-Target-Plan/public-consultation.
[2] Service contract n. 340201/2020/827061/SER/CLIMA.C.1. Consortium composed by Trinomics, Ricardo and Tyrsky.

3. Open Public Consultation

3.1. Overview of participants

The public consultation received a **total of 3 915 replies** from **26 Member States.** Further **116 replies** were received from outside of the EU. **3 302 replies** came from **individuals** and **729 from organisations.**

Figure 1. Country of origin

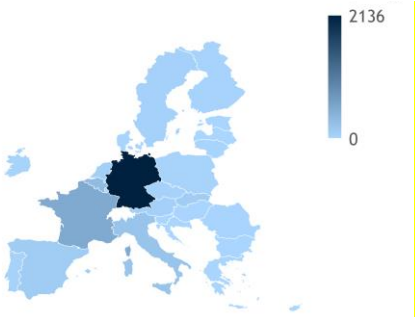
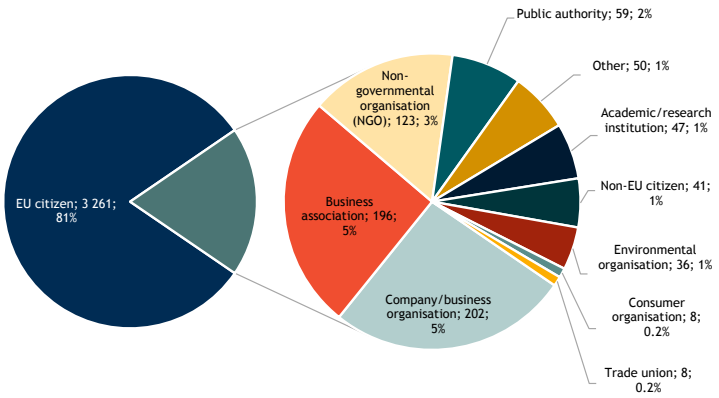


Figure 2. Types of stakeholders



As shown in Figure 1, the largest number of replies came from Germany (53%; 2 136 respondents), and France (13%; 521 respondents). After individuals, the largest proportion of respondents (13%; 521 respondents) came from company/business organisations, business associations, and NGOs, as depicted in Figure 2. Respondents were mainly active in the **sectors** of education (23%; 823 respondents), and transport, storage and communications (10%; 379 stakeholders).

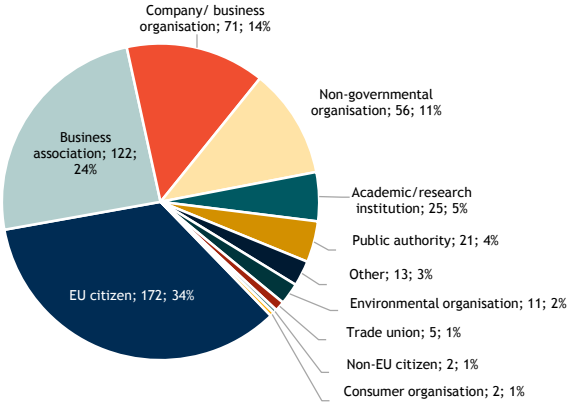
In total 14 **Member State national authorities** replied to the 2030 Climate Target Plan Consultation, **five of which** contributed at the **government and/or legislative level** (The Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Czechia, France,) while **seven** contributed at the **ministerial level** (Cyprus, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, Spain and Slovakia). Additional submissions came from two **non-EU ministerial bodies** (Norway, Brazil). Among other member state authorities, **several federal states** of the Federal Republics of Germany and Austria provided their feedback, as well as Flemish Government and **two national level technical bodies** (the German Environment Agency Umweltbundesamt and the French National Centre for Forest Property CNPF). **Out of the EU Member State national authorities, six argue to increase the 2030 climate ambition to 55%** (the Government of the Netherlands and of Finland, the Government as well as the Parliament of Denmark, the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Change in Spain, the Government of France). **One EU Member State national authority opted for an increase of the 2030 climate ambition of 50%** (the Ministry of Environment of Slovakia). By contrast, **six EU national MS authorities would prefer to leave**

it unchanged, at the level of 40% GHG reduction (the Government of Czechia, the Ministry of Economy of Slovakia, ministries of environment in Lithuania and Estonia, the Ministry of Transport, Information, technology and Communication of Bulgaria and the Ministry of Energy, Commerce & Industry in Cyprus). **Two MS authorities did not indicate a preferred level of ambition** but gave further precisions: the Ministry of Energy of Bulgaria considers it appropriate to further revise the 2030 GHG emission reduction target provided there is a detailed assessment of the effects at national, regional and EU level. The Ministry for Innovation and Technology in Hungary argues that for such an increase of ambition at the EU level, deep decarbonisation is needed in the energy, transport, heating and cooling and industrial sectors, which must remain the top priority.

Among the identified **benefits** of an increase of the 2030 climate ambition the MS national authorities evoked in particular the following opportunities: this would be a chance to do our part in saving the planet and thus fulfilling our duty towards the future generations; it will allow a more gradual pathway to reaching a climate neutral EU by 2050; it will help mitigate costs associated with climate change to the society; it will ensure a growing EU economy based on new production and consumption models, etc. The **challenges** evoked for the increase of the ambition were: it will represent a significant investment challenge for EU industry, services, transport and energy sections; it will likely lead to a structural shift and changing skills requirements in the economy; it may lead to significant labor reallocation across sectors, occupations and regions; it will confront us with a reduced lead-time for devising and implementing measures and for the economic actors to adjust.

Additional papers could be provided both through the public consultation and the Inception Impact Assessment. In total, **500** attachments were submitted by 491 respondents. Figure 3 shows the types of respondents providing additional papers.

Figure 3. – Types of stakeholders providing additional attachments



233 of these attachments were selected for analysis. They did not include Inception Impact Assessment attachments or duplicated campaign responses.

3.2. Methodology of data processing

As questions in the online survey were optional, the percentages presented below refer to the total respondents that answered the concerned questions. Some questions allowed respondents to 'rate' options (1-5 or 1-8). On these ratings, the report provides figures for the "highest rating" category, as this is indicative of most support.

The position papers were processed via cataloguing. Data from each paper was logged in a database to provide key themes and information from paper and author.

Some campaigns were identified in the open replies and survey attachments. The largest campaign (8%; 329 respondents), constituting of mostly private individuals, advocated mainly for a higher climate ambition, and a common carbon price. A second campaign (<1%; 40 respondents), also mostly private individuals, pushed for a revision of the methodology to calculate the GHG emissions of the agriculture sector. A third campaign (<1%; 35 respondents), supported mainly by NGOs, requested coherence with the Paris Agreement and a bigger focus on the costs of inaction. A fourth campaign (<1%; 20 respondents) of private individuals, proposed a climate dividend for citizens as a carbon pricing mechanism.

3.3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was composed of two sections: one collecting general feedback, and the second, seeking the views of expert stakeholders on specific policy measures.

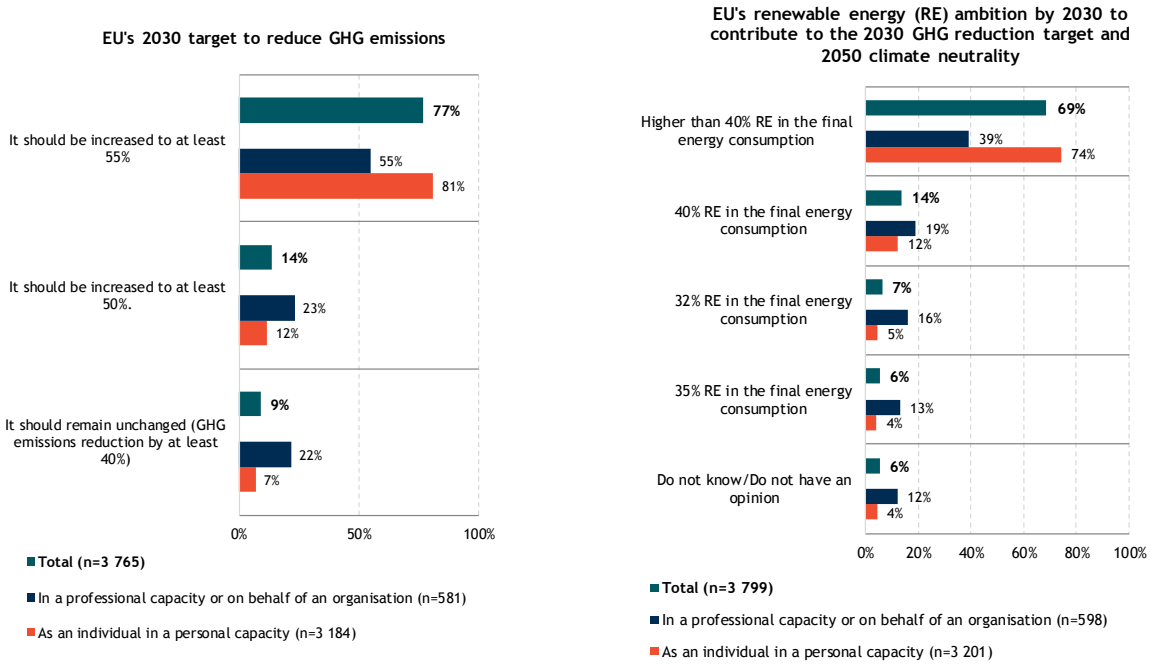
3.3.1.PART I – General feedback

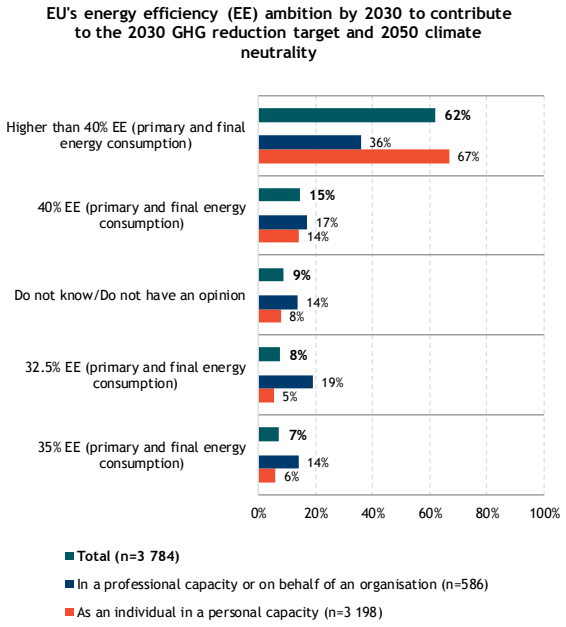
The first part of the questionnaire covered the overall 2030 climate ambition, sectoral action, and enabling conditions.

Overall climate ambition for 2030, opportunities and challenges

Figure 4 shows the answers provided in relation with different targets. First, regarding the **EU GHG reduction target,** most respondents believed that it should be increased to 55% (77%; 2 904 respondents). Most respondents (69%; 2 613 respondents) perceived that the current target for **renewable energy** (32%) should be increased to a share higher than 40%. Similarly, an increase to greater than 40% of improvement in **energy efficiency** compared to the current target (32.5%) was preferred (62%; 2 345 respondents).

Figure 4.Views on EU's climate and energy 2030 targets





The main opportunity for achieving a higher ambition, according to respondents, was to lower pollution to improve health and wellbeing (14%; 3 081 respondents) whereas, the main perceived challenge was the decline in jobs not a part of the transition (20%; 2 084 respondents). Overall, **respondents perceived that opportunities outweigh challenges** (84%; 3 299 respondents).

Sectoral action and potential to reduce GHG emissions by 2030

Respondents rated action in energy supply (48%; 1 705 respondents with highest rating), mobility and transport (16%; 547 respondents with highest rating), as the most influential sectors for achieving the transition. Table 1 summarizes the views regarding the role of various sectors in the achievement of higher EU climate targets.

Table 1-Role of various sectors and actions to achieve EU climate targets, as preferred by respondents

Preferred sectoral contribution	Respondents support *(% of total replies per question; number of respondents)*
Energy	
Higher penetration of renewable energy in the energy system	18%; 3 213
Fossil Fuels	
Phase-out of public support on fossil-fuel investments	16%; 2 925
Stop the use of natural gas, as it will lead to issues (lock-ins) for achieving targets	59%; 2 265
Buildings	

Improve the thermal properties of residential buildings	40%; 1 426 (highest rating)
Applying energy management systems for non-residential buildings	40%; 1 426 (highest rating)
Industry	
Develop a circular economy	63%; 2 245 (highest rating)
Road transport	
Improve the affordability of sustainable road transport	57%; 1 993 (highest rating)
Remove barrier of the availability of recharge and refuelling infrastructure	31%; 2 755
Land-Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry	
Sustainable forest management, restoration, and preservation	12%; 2 981

Enabling conditions and other policies

A section of the questionnaire focused on the enabling conditions and other policies necessary to achieve the 2030 GHG reduction target, and covered consumer choices, just transition and employment, carbon pricing, and research funding.

The most selected **consumer choices** to reduce emissions included travelling less by plane (18%; 3 110 respondents), and reduced car-use (17%; 2 976 respondents).

Regarding **just transition and employment**, respondents stated that the most important action was economic diversification and modernisation away from fossil fuels (26%; 2 659 respondents).

On **carbon pricing**, most respondents perceived that the revenue from carbon pricing should be used to finance green technologies and low-emission mobility infrastructure (27%; 2 799 respondents).

Finally, respondents selected energy storage (12%; 2 423 respondents), and circular or zero-carbon industry (12%; 2 405 respondents) as the main **areas of research** governments should fund.

3.3.2.PART II – Specific policy design

The second part of the questionnaire covered the design of climate and energy policies, and the outreach to third countries. A total of 1 599 respondents replied to this section (40% of total respondents, 1 141 providing their views as private individuals, 458 as representatives of an organisation).

Climate and energy policy design

When discussing key pieces of the **current EU climate legislation**, the EU-ETS was perceived as requiring the most increased climate ambition (55%; 883 respondents with highest rating), compared to the ESR and LULUCF.

The main instruments considered by respondents to strengthen the **EU-ETS** were the introduction of a pricing policy (e.g. minimum price floor) (24%; 664 respondents), reducing or eliminating the share of free allocation (24%; 658 stakeholders) and increasing the linear reduction factor (23%; 626 stakeholders). With regard to **free allocation**, most respondents believed that the share of EU-ETS allowances allocated for free to the industry should decline (60%; 870 respondents).

Concerning the extension of the **EU-ETS to the road transport and buildings sectors**, most respondents preferred carbon pricing to complement other sector-specific policies (64%; 1 009 respondents), principally in the form of a CO_2 tax (64%; 966 respondents). For both buildings (32%; 425 respondents) and road transport (55%; 733 respondents), a plurality of respondents preferred a uniform carbon price across Member States by inclusion in the EU ETS, and a large majority favoured for both sectors a carbon price set at EU level.

Other sectors respondents wished to integrate in the EU-ETS included **maritime transport** (41%; 541 respondents). In case that the EU ETS would be extended to buildings and transport, also other energy-related CO2 emissions should be integrated (46%, 676 respondents). If so, views are rather similar on agriculture (35%; 557 respondents), municipal waste (34%; 550 respondents) and small industrial installations (31%, 494 respondents).

On the challenges and opportunities related to the extension of the EU ETS, the major opportunity was perceived to be helping the EU to achieve its climate and environmental objectives (51%; 660 respondents with highest rating), while the largest challenge was social acceptability (45%; 539 respondents with highest rating).

A plurality of respondents were unaware or had no opinion on the **role of the ESR** in reflecting an increased EU climate ambition (40%; 585 respondents). Those with a view favoured that the ESR ambition should be derived from cost-effective contribution compared to EU ETS and LULUCF (22%; 328 stakeholders) and rather preferred that CO_2 emissions from ESR sectors covered by EU ETS should remain in the ESR (18%) than being excluded (9%).

The last piece of climate legislation covered in the questionnaire was the **LULUCF**. Respondents on average prioritised making LULUCF accounting rules more stringent (53%; 437 respondents with highest rating).

From **EU energy legislative instruments**, respondents perceived the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) as requiring most revision to achieve higher targets (30%; 884 respondents).

Table 2 summarizes the views regarding a variety of policy areas in the achievement of higher EU climate targets.

Table 2 - EU policies to achieve higher climate ambition, as preferred by respondents

Policy areas	Preferred policy contribution	Respondents support *(% of total replies per question; number of respondents)*
Energy		
Increased Renewable energy target	Develop the necessary infrastructure to increase production	56%; 718 (highest rating)
Increased Energy efficiency target	More stringent energy performance requirements for the transport vehicles	57%; 667 (highest rating)
Energy infrastructure and sector integration	Focus on electricity transmission and smart grids	38%; 862
Building		
Building renovations	Encourage better urban planning and construction of sustainable buildings and green infrastructure	9%; 909
	Remove barrier of long pay-back periods	14%; 830
Industry		
Industrial transformation	The implementation of circular economy processes	48%; 607 (highest rating)
Waste		
Waste policy	Prohibiting landfilling and limiting waste incineration to increase recycling	23%; 860

EU policies and outreach towards third countries on climate change policy

The G20 and the G7 was believed by respondents as the areas the EU should focus on for its **climate diplomacy and cooperation efforts** in coming years (14%; 839 respondents). The circular economy and decent supply chains was

the favoured approach for **development assistance and finance for third countries** (15%; 842 respondents). On **improvements to trade and foreign policy instruments,** respondents favoured border measures to avoid carbon leakage (16%; 890 respondents).

Regarding **most important deliverables to be achieved at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 26)**, respondents favoured finalising the Katowice rulebook to make the PA fully operational (17%; 951 respondents).

Additional information

Respondents provided comments to both Parts of the questionnaire, I (47%; 1 883 respondents) and II (14%; 604 respondents). The key themes provided by respondents included the importance of behavioural change and improved education on climate change, and the urgency of ambitious climate action. A few respondents (2%; 66 respondents) provided comments related to the formulation of the questions and structure of the survey, with most of these stating that the questionnaire was not neutral or that it used a biased formulation.

3.4. Attachments and other relevant position papers

Key messages of reviewed papers:

- Provided additional depth to themes explored through the questionnaire;
- Considered wide range of emissions sources, specifically transport and energy;
- Technologies considered 'critical' to the transition were in line with sectors considered 'important';
- Some proposed need for changes to existing legislation: for example, review of RED II Directive or funding for energy efficiency technologies in buildings;
- Identified range of barriers to achieving the climate targets, including: fossil fuel subsidies, growth of aviation and lack of sufficient co-ordination between MS.

Proposed revised 2030 targets

Regarding the 2030 targets, some of the revised papers (17%; 39 papers) rated the current **2030 GHG emission targets** as appropriate, while others (18%; 42 papers) rated them as being too low. Only few (5 %; 12 papers)

indicated that the targets are too high. The largest share (60%; 140 papers) did not provide an opinion.

Among the papers analysed, some (9%; 21 papers) provided a new specific target of 55% GHG reductions of 1990 levels by 2030. Smaller shares stated that the value should be higher than 55% (4 %; 10 papers), and that it should be raised to 50% (2%; 5 papers).

Sector coverage

The main two sectors identified in the position papers reviewed were **Transport** (19%; 43 papers) and **Energy** (25%; 58 papers). In each case, the papers noted key decarbonisation actions, including banning combustion vehicles by 2025, decreasing aviation, promoting low emission zones and developing public transport; and phasing out coal and increasing nuclear energy sources. Opinions were also expressed on **energy savings from buildings,** through **renovation**; **circularity** in the **waste sector**; promoting green and healthy diets and food production; **green economy** without leaving disabled citizens behind and greater **collaboration between States**.

Key sectorial actions, means or technologies

The papers further highlighted technologies within the sectors identified as critical to the low-carbon transition. Some (22%; 52 papers) mentioned the need to **transition away from coal energy** to either gas or a green supply. A second group (7%; 17 papers) mentioned the need to support **carbon capture and storage** projects. Several papers identified technologies associated with the **transport sector** as key to reaching the targets, including alternative and zero emission vehicles, sustainable fuels, infrastructure for cleaner modes of transport, and lighter vehicles. Others (8%; 18 papers) discussed the need to become more **energy efficient** within their sector, including 5 papers mentioning the use of increasing volumes of data to inform action.

Changes to EU climate and energy legislation

A group of submissions (19%; 45 papers) discussed the **role of the ETS** in driving decarbonisation, presenting mixed arguments to both tighten or loosen its scope, and arguing for an expansion to the buildings and transport sectors. Others (3%; 7 papers) discussed the role of the **RED II Directive**.

Barriers to meeting targets

Barriers to meeting the climate targets were discussed by some of the papers (38%, 88 papers). The biggest barrier was considered **issues with legislation** (14%; 32 papers), the most frequent comments being *'ineffective'* or '*unclear strategy or framework*'. Other comments linked to poor governance state the threats of legislators '*being complacent'* in addressing climate change (4%; 10

papers). In addition, many other papers highlighted that a lack of political will would likely result in inaction. Some (5%; 12 papers) also noted continuation of subsides for fossil fuels would affect the achievement of GHG emissions targets, while others (3%; 8 papers) stated that a lack of financial support will be a barrier to progress. Other issues highlighted included the growth in aviation transport rather than rail, lack of sufficient cooperation between countries, untreated landfill and recyclable waste, societal attitude, and lack of awareness.