

CLEAN ENERGY FOR ALL EUROPEANS: TIME TO DELIVER!

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Two years ago, on February 25th 2015, the European Commission embraced the comprehensive approach to the Energy Union [advocated by the Jacques Delors Institute](#). It has now delivered the key proposals that will shape Europe's energy future. Negotiation starts and we now must help decision-makers achieving an "Energy Union Deal" serving the interests of European citizens. One way forward is for the European Commission to act, as a regulator and a financier, but also as a dynamic enabler working with forward-looking companies, NGOs and elected officials to show the real-life benefits of delivering clean energy for all.

Dark clouds are looming over Europe: Trump, Putin, Erdogan, Brexit, Terrorism, youth unemployment, climate change, air pollution. Challenges to Europe have never been so clear and so should be the opportunities.

Europe's energy system is in revolution. By replacing coal, oil and gas by the efficient use of renewable energy, Europeans improve their safety in the face of air pollution, climate change, Russian divisiveness and oil-financed Islamic radicalisation.

Two years ago, on February 25th 2015, the European Commission embraced the comprehensive approach to the Energy Union [advocated by the Jacques Delors Institute](#). It has now delivered the concrete legislative proposals for an "Energy Union deal" that should deliver a robust regulatory framework able to deliver clean energy for all Europeans. Reaching such deal requires further efforts, in particular in building the mutual trust that founds solidarity. One way forward is for the European Commission to act also as a facilitator between public and private players to promote concrete projects that benefit citizens, like Erasmus in education, or the [Baltic Energy Market Interconnection](#) in energy.

Joining forces with local and national authorities, the European Commission should appeal to forward-looking European companies. To illustrate, [the Juncker Plan](#) should be used to support and co-create a project to equip all European highways and cities with charging points for electric vehicles by 2020.

To identify similarly useful projects, the European Commission should:

- Map the strengths and weaknesses of all European regions vis-à-vis the energy transition as to see its

opportunities and threats. This should help identifying champions and showing how countries can benefit.

- Federate forward-looking European companies into a coalition for the transition.
- Work with mayors that experience the comprehensive nature of energy, encompassing mobility, heat and power. The [Covenant of Mayors](#) offers a unique platform to that effect.

To build social and political consensus in Europe, we moreover need a social pact to ensure that the energy transition effectively benefits all Europeans. This is why the European Commission should identify concrete projects to:

- Anticipate the downsides to the energy transition to ensure that workers at risk of losing their jobs are well taken care of.
- Fight youth unemployment by maximising green quality job opportunities, for instance with a 'green [Erasmus pro](#)' programme for apprentices.
- Eradicate energy poverty. This requires a comprehensive understanding of its root causes: income, energy price, housing quality, mobility options, individual behaviour, belief systems and social norms.
- Wage war on [air pollution as it kills 430.000 people every year in the EU](#) and puts a strain on public health spending.

A comprehensive approach to the energy transition holds a challenging but promising external dimension. Europeans must aim at becoming the global providers of low-carbon solutions, creating jobs for Europeans

while helping developing countries to leapfrog from energy scarcity to clean energy abundance. In concrete terms, the EU should:

- **Make European islands the figureheads of the energy transition**, showing that Malta and Cyprus, as well as Europe's outermost regions can benefit from a transition to a 100% renewable energy mix.
- Show that Europe is not the fall guy of globalisation. Chinese dumping on solar panels did destroy thousands of European jobs in the solar industry. China is now purchasing European electricity transport system operators (TSOs), starting in Portugal and Italy. The EU must use its trade, security and competition tools to effectively protect European interests, in this case ensuring that those purchases will not be detrimental to European companies that provide equipment to European TSOs -while being excluded from the Chinese market. Mapping foreign investments

into strategic sectors (energy, digital, media) is a necessary first step.

- **Develop an EU-Africa energy transition partnership** embedding public authorities and civil society. The aim is to provide clean electricity to the 600 million Africans with no access to electricity. This is necessary for African economic development, opening new business opportunities while preventing economic misery from feeding forced migration.

The European Commission delivered the **key proposals** that will shape Europe's energy future. Negotiation starts and we now must help decision-makers achieving an 'Energy Union Deal' serving the interests of European citizens. One way forward is for the European Commission to act, as a regulator and a financier, but also as a dynamic enabler working with forward-looking companies, NGOs and elected officials to show the real-life benefits of delivering clean energy for all.

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