



## The energy transition – A driver of innovation

"Ice for heating" and electric vehicles used as power storage – New technologies and ideas for our energy landscape as showcased at the Hannover Messe. **Find out more**



# What exactly are the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs)?

What do the EU's National Energy and Climate Plans and school essays have in common? Well, whether it's a class of 28 pupils or 28 EU Member States – the task is to tackle one specific subject. Ultimately, 28 different answers to the same question are put on the table and are subjected to close scrutiny.



This is what it's all about: The EU's Member States are to join forces to address the energy transition and climate change mitigation in the EU together. And the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) are to help them do so.

Remember the feeling when you were writing an essay in school and you were running out of time? The persons drafting the NECPs in the European capital cities probably felt the same way as the deadline for submitting the plans was drawing closer. Everybody wants their solution to be coherent and to receive a positive assessment. The draft versions of the [National Energy and Climate Plans \(NECPs\) of all the 28 EU Member States](#) were published at the beginning of 2019. The final versions are to be submitted before the end of the year. But a lot remains to be done until then.

## A valuable source of information for the EU's energy and climate policies

Across 28 documents and thousands of pages, the EU Member States describe in detail their national energy and climate policies for a period of 10 years. The legal basis for this is the European Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union (Governance Regulation). This Regulation requires all EU Member States to draft NECPs for the period between 2021 and 2030 and also sets down the rules for how the plans are to be structured and what these are to contain.

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## **The five dimensions of the EU Energy Union**

The NECPs cover the five dimensions of the EU Energy Union. These include reducing greenhouse gas emissions (and therefore carbon emissions) and developing renewables, energy efficiency, a secure energy supply, energy single market and research, innovation and competitiveness. All drafts have a political/strategic and an analytical part.

The European Commission will closely scrutinise the plans in the first 6 months of 2019 and assess whether the measures and targets described by the Member States are coherent. Each EU Member State needs to do its bit in order for the EU's energy and climate targets for 2030 to be met.

### **A joint plan – the EU's energy and climate targets for 2030**

Greenhouse gas emissions are to be reduced by at least 40 per cent compared with 1990 levels. The share of renewables in final energy consumption is to be raised to at least 32 per cent and energy efficiency is to be improved. Primary energy consumption is to be cut by at least 32.5 per cent.

In particular, Member States are asked to provide detailed information in their NECPs about the contribution they intend to make to the EU's 2030 targets for energy efficiency and renewables expansion.

In order to ensure that the binding targets are met, the Governance Regulation includes a number of monitoring and revision mechanisms in case the Member States' voluntary contributions prove to be insufficient. The NECPs serve as the basis for meeting these targets. The European energy transition and joint climate action will only be successful, if all European Member States shape and support the energy transition and climate action in the EU together.

### **All 28 climate plans are structured in a way that makes them comparable**

The NECPs allow for the European Member States' energy and climate policies to be compared and coordinated for the first time. They give neighbouring countries a basis they can use to engage in dialogue with one another. This will help, for example, to prevent any negative impacts of the planned measures and to make it easier to identify opportunities for cooperation.

Germany's draft plan is based on a number of different national strategies, targets and measures including the Energy Concept, the Climate Action Plan 2050, the National Action Plan on Energy Efficiency (NAPE), the 7th Energy Research Programme, the 'Electricity 2030' working paper and on a number of laws, rules and regulations such as the Renewable Energy Sources Act. Germany's final plan is to be published by 31 December 2019.

### **All NECPs are to be completed before the end of 2019**

Once the European Commission has assessed the draft plans, it will provide each country with targeted advice on its NECPs and publish the recommendations it has given. For the EU, the consultation of the general public in the drafting of the NECPs is of particular importance as, ultimately, it is the people that need to support the measures adopted by each Member State. The Federal Government plans to consult the general public on its NECP draft. The final Energy and Climate Plans need to be submitted to the Commission no later than 31 December 2019. They will serve as an important source of information for the EU's energy and climate policies.

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## "Update, please!"

This is because the EU Commission wants to assess the progress that each Member State makes on reaching their targets.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

- [\[> European Commission – NECP drafts of all Member States](#)
  - [\[> 'Electricity 2030' – working paper by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy](#)
  - [\[> Climate Action Plan 2050](#)
  - [\[> National Action Plan on Energy Efficiency \(NAPE\)](#)
  - [\[> 7th Energy Research Programme of the Federal Government](#)
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## Renewables see a strong increase in 2018

**The share of renewables in gross electricity generation is continuing to rise. According to figures published by the working group on renewable energy statistics, it reached 38 per cent in 2018.**



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The preliminary statistics on the development of renewable energy paint a positive picture. The share of renewables in total gross energy consumption grew considerably last year, rising from 15.5 per cent in 2017 to an estimated 16.6 per cent in 2018. This means that the Federal Government is coming closer to achieving its binding target of a share of renewables of 18 per cent by 2020.

This positive development is largely due to high solar yields, the continued expansion of wind energy in 2016 and 2017 and lots of wind in 2017 and 2018, both onshore and offshore. However, the number of wind farms that were installed in 2018 fell below that of previous years.

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## Major increase in all three sectors

The share of renewables-based heat also increased in 2018. Whilst the use of renewable energy in the heat sector stagnated in 2018, the total amount of energy used for generating heat decreased, which can be attributed to the mild weather.

The share of near-surface geothermal energy (geothermal heat) and that of ambient heat – which are used to provide energy for heat pumps – increased in 2018. And the many hours of sun last year allowed optimal use of the solar installations. However, the use of biomass – which is the most important renewable energy source for generating heat – declined. The share of renewables-based heat therefore remained the same compared with the previous year. Biofuels in the transport sector rose by around 5 per cent in 2018.

## Share of renewable energy increases in the electricity, heat and transport sectors

The share of renewable energy in the electricity, heat and transport sectors increased considerably in 2018. As a result, primary energy consumption decreased in 2018, falling by 3.5 per cent compared with the previous year. However, the reduction was lower than forecasted by the Working Group on Energy Balances. Primary energy consumption is the consumption of energy that is directly contained in energy sources and has not yet been converted into electricity, heat or petrol.

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

[\[→ Renewable Energy\]](#)

[\[→ Development of Electricity Generation from Renewables in Germany – infographic provided by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy\]](#)

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## Quote of the week



"Companies that take part in energy efficiency networks usually reduce their energy consumption and carbon emissions by more than they have planned, whilst at the same time showcasing the German economy's ability to perform and innovate."

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State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy Andreas Feicht, as he presented awards to successful energy efficiency networks at the 2019 Hannover Messe.

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## Solar Decathlon to be held in Germany for the first time

In 2021, the energy in buildings competition for international students will take place in Germany for the first time. The competition focuses on buildings as a key element of urban transformation. University teams have until October 2019 to apply and receive up to 150,000 euros in seed capital for their ideas. The participants will be selected in December 2019 and then have almost two years to design innovative, energy-efficient homes and implement their designs.

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