

Energy infrastructure

Commission recognises need to put infrastructure at the heart of EU energy strategy

The European Commission today presented its energy infrastructure package, outlining EU energy infrastructure needs (from 2020-30). Green MEPs gave a cautious welcome to the proposals. Commenting on the package, Greens/EFA energy spokesperson **Claude Turmes** said:

"Energy infrastructure must be a central element of EU energy policy and strategy if the EU is to progress towards a renewable energy-based economy and it is welcome that the Commission is recognising this. Integrated planning and better, interconnected electricity and gas grids are essential to speed up the shift towards decentralised and centralised renewable energy in Europe.

"The Greens welcome the prioritisation of developing a North Sea grid, which is crucial for EU energy security and achieving our climate change goals. This is where the infrastructure focus should be, rather than on the costly diversions of EU-Mediterranean interconnections or implementing infrastructure for a carbon capture technology that may never be viable. However, there needs to be more urgency in deciding on and implementing the necessary infrastructure for the European electricity grid. For example, it is hard to comprehend why the decision on a crucial DC link from the North Sea to industrial load centres in Germany and Alpine hydro storage facilities should be delayed until 2020.

"We welcome the fact that the Commission finally recognises that a more ambitious energy efficiency policy at EU level will substantially reduce the need, and consequently the costs, for infrastructure development. We hope that this will be followed on by an ambitious EU energy efficiency action plan, with new legislative proposals on energy efficiency before the summer of 2011."

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Claude Turmes

Member

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