

Climate change

EU on track to meet 2020 renewable energy target, report shows

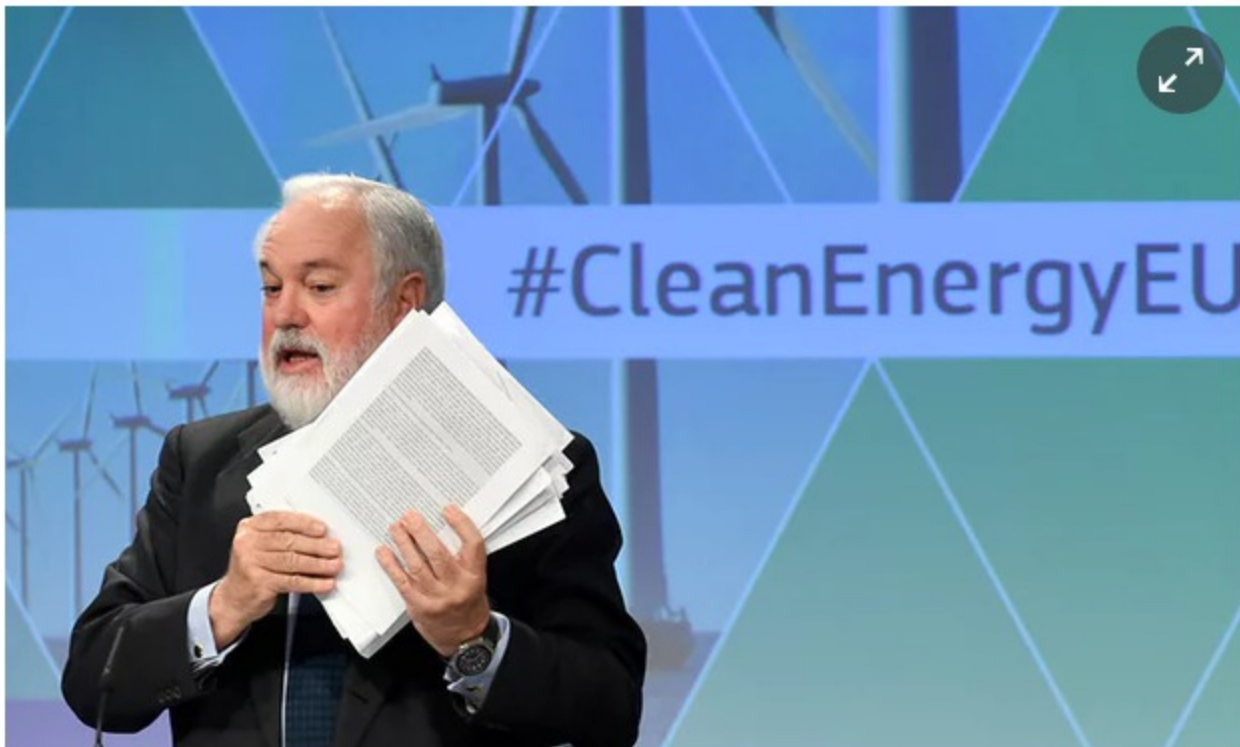
Energy and climate targets are ‘well within reach’ but the transport sector is lagging behind

Agence France-Presse

Thursday 1 December 2016 15:18 GMT



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EU climate commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete gives a press conference on the Clean Energy package at the EU headquarters in Brussels on 30 November. Photograph: John Thys/AFP/Getty Images

EU countries are on track to meet their 2020 targets for renewable energy and emissions cuts but could fall short of ambitious longer-term goals, the European Environment Agency (EEA) said on Thursday.

“The EU’s 2020 targets on energy and climate are now well within reach,” EEA executive director Hans Bruyninckx said.

“But certain trends are alarming, [in particular for transport](#). In that sector, renewable energy use remains insufficient and greenhouse gas emissions are rising again,” Bruyninckx added.

The bloc’s 2020 target calls for 20% of gross final energy consumption to come from renewable sources, and that number rose to 16.4% in 2015 from 16% in 2014, according to preliminary estimates cited in the report.

Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions grew slightly in 2015 but the increase came after “an exceptionally warm winter” the previous year, which led to lower energy demand for heating, the report said.

The EU was also well on its way to meeting its target of reducing energy consumption by 13% compared to 2005 levels. Preliminary data showed that by 2015 consumption was 11% lower.

Under the Paris climate deal struck almost a year ago, the bloc plans to make renewable energy [account for 27% of energy use by 2030](#), and to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40% compared to 1990 levels.

By 2050, it hopes greenhouse gas emissions will be down by 80%.

Meeting the 2030 target for renewable energy would “require additional efforts because regulatory changes affect investors’ confidence in renewables, while market barriers persist,” the agency said.

Similarly, the energy efficiency target would need “effective implementation of energy efficiency measures as well as a rapid change in consumer behaviour.”

The EU on Wednesday [unveiled “clean energy” plans to boost renewables, cut waste and reduce subsidies for coal power](#) in a bid to meet its commitments under the Paris climate deal.

Binding energy efficiency targets would also be raised by 30% by 2030 under the sweeping package of measures from the European commission.

But environmental groups have accused the bloc of doing too little to end subsidies for carbon-spewing coal power plants, and of undermining investments in renewables.

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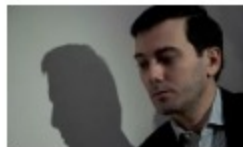
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