



Council of the
European Union

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AGRI 68
COMPET 49
TRANS 55

NOTE

From: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)
To: Council

Subject: Energy Union
- Presentation by the Commission
- Exchange of views

I. INTRODUCTION

At its meeting in June 2014, the European Council established a "Strategic agenda for the Union in times of change" with "**Towards an Energy Union with a forward-looking climate policy**" (hereafter "Energy Union") as one of its five building blocks, to steer policy priorities during the new EU policy cycle.¹ This thematic priority is to focus on affordable energy for companies and citizens, secure energy for all countries, and green energy. The Commission President's political guidelines of July 2014 spelled out main priorities for Commission action in this area.

As a follow-up to the European Council, the Council (General Affairs) held thematic debates on Strategic Agenda priorities, including a debate on Energy Union on 18 November 2014, on the basis of a Presidency note setting out the state of play on some of the main orientations relevant to the Energy Union.²

¹ EUCO 79/14 Annex I.

² 15195/1/14 REV 1.

In its conclusions of 18 December 2014, the European Council called on the Commission to present a comprehensive Energy Union proposal well ahead of the March 2015 European Council. The Commission adopted its Communication "**A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy**" on 25 February 2015, together with a Communication on "**The Paris Protocol – A blueprint for tackling global climate change beyond 2020**" (in view of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 21)) and a Communication on "**Achieving the 10% electricity interconnection target, Making Europe's electricity grid fit for 2020**".³

As a major contribution to ongoing reflections on the development of the Energy Union, the Presidency, in cooperation with the Commission, organised a high-level Conference in Riga on 6 February 2015, which launched the "Riga Process" of establishment of the Energy Union, by providing a platform for a broad dialogue of stakeholders and including discussions at ministerial level and with stakeholders on the five dimensions of the Energy Union (supply security, based on solidarity and trust; a competitive and completed internal energy market; greater energy efficiency; decarbonisation of the EU energy mix; research and innovation).

II. QUESTIONS FOR THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Building on these discussions, and in order to deepen the reflection on the shaping of the Energy Union, also with a view to the March 2015 European Council meeting, the Presidency suggests to focus on the following questions for the exchange of views:⁴

1. What do you see as the main lines of action to further develop and advance the concept of Energy Union?
2. Which aspects of sustainability, competitiveness and security of supply should be addressed more urgently as part of the development of the Energy Union, and how?
3. In which dimensions of the Energy Union do you see a potential for a regional cooperation?

³ 6594/15, 6588/15 and 6595/15 respectively.

⁴ The Council (Environment) on 6 March 2015 will hold an exchange of views on relevant aspects of the Energy Union (6225/15).

These questions are without prejudice to other important topics that Ministers might wish to address in the context of considerations on the Energy Union. In order to keep the exchange of views as focused as possible, delegations at the Council will be invited to concentrate their interventions on their key messages and provide additional elements in writing.
