

CITIZENS' SUMMARY

EU plan for a competitive low-carbon economy by 2050

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

- The EU is examining ways to make its economy more **climate-friendly and less energy-intensive** by 2050 – looking at key sectors such as power, industry, transport, buildings and farming.
- To keep global warming below 2°C, the world will need to **halve its emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases by 2050** (compared with 1990 levels). Developed countries will need to reduce more – by 80-95% by 2050.
- In 2050, with a forecast world population of 9 billion, intense competition for oil, gas, and other resources is likely to make **fossil fuels much more expensive** – unless we can improve our energy efficiency and invest in non-fossil energy sources.
- Other major economies are also investing heavily in clean technologies. If Europe stands still, we risk losing our lead, together with the **jobs and growth** it brings.

WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?

- The new EU plan or 'roadmap' sets out the cost-effective route for transforming Europe into a competitive 'low-carbon' economy by mid-century.
- This would involve cuts to the EU's greenhouse emissions by 80% by 2050 (compared with 1990 levels) entirely through measures taken within Europe. Intermediate cuts of 25% by 2020, 40% by 2030 and 60% by 2040 would be needed.
- Improving **energy efficiency**, for instance by investing in energy-efficient buildings and transport, can make the biggest contribution to reducing emissions.
- **Clean electricity** – produced almost entirely without greenhouse emissions – will also have a major role to play, partly replacing fossil fuels for heating and transport (e.g. electric cars).

WHAT WOULD THE BENEFITS BE?

- Further developing low-energy technologies, such as renewable energy sources and electric vehicles, and investing in low carbon infrastructure will stimulate growth and help create **new jobs** and **save existing jobs**. Refurbishing buildings, for instance, will provide big opportunities in the construction industry.
- The EU would **halve oil and gas imports**. This would improve Europe's energy security, strengthen our resilience to future oil price increases and cut our fuel import bill by a considerable amount.
- **Air pollution** would be drastically reduced, leading to big savings in health costs and pollution control measures.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

- As the roadmap is discussed within the EU, the Commission will propose more detailed initiatives for **individual industries**. These will be in line with the plan and with the EU's [*Europe 2020*](#) growth strategy (particularly [*resource-efficient Europe*](#))