

## Press release

# European Parliament votes shows a new long-term EU approach on energy takes shape, but will it pass the test of time?

Brussels, 15 September 2022

*In the midst of an energy crisis that has prompted a series of temporary measures to replace Russian gas and limit price increases, the European Parliament adopted yesterday its position on 2 pieces of legislation that are key to the future of Europe's energy independence, and its longer-term perspectives for decarbonisation.*

Formally the revision of pre-existing EU Directives, the proposals passed include new targets for both renewable energy and energy efficiency. A new 2030 goal for the share of renewables in Europe's energy mix will increase it by 5 percentage points, up to 45%, while the energy consumed by end users should at the same time decrease by 14,5%. Most projections for a European Union that would be both energy independent and decarbonised by 2050 foresee an increase in energy consumption, rather than a decrease. **It is questionable whether simultaneously switching to renewable energy and investing in various decarbonisation technologies and measures might be possible with a cap on overall energy use.**

The Renewable Energy Directive also rightly addresses the most serious concerns regarding sourcing of biomass for energy and the current revision further strengthens these provisions. Cepi also supports the European Parliament's objective to reach an efficient use of wood as a raw material, by preventing subsidies from distorting raw material markets. However, the European Parliament, by limiting the share of primary biomass in the renewable energy expansion, questions the basic principles of the renewability of wood. **This could undermine the EU's future as a clean energy and circular economy powerhouse**, where the paper industry and other bioeconomy actors have a key role to play. Cepi now hopes that trilogue negotiations will implement sustainability and raw material efficiency safeguards while avoiding capping primary biomass use.

What will now be the European Parliament's negotiating mandate on the Renewable Energy Directive also rules on the phase out of fossil combustion for industrial heat of up to 200°C, which would directly impact the pulp and paper industry. However, **Cepi welcomes the fact that incentives from EU Member States to increase the availability and affordability of renewable alternatives are foreseen.**

Energy efficiency is another area in which the paper industry is particularly innovative and provides important energy savings. In the upcoming trilogue, **ensuring that the paper industry's efforts to improve energy efficiency including through cogeneration technologies can be recognised** under the Energy Efficiency Directive will be key to create a legislative framework for EU energy that can pass the test of time.

### Quotes

*"We need a balanced approach for our energy future, where affordable non-fossil energy can be used in the most efficient and productive ways. This is a prerequisite for the transformation of our economy towards a more sustainable and circular model."*

*"The strict capping of future energy use, including renewable energy, contradicts what we know of the effects of many other EU policy goals. For example, the increased energy consumption from climate change mitigation and pollution prevention techniques, the need to strive for higher added value production in Europe or the important goal of strategic autonomy. All of this will require more energy while at the same time continuing our efforts on energy efficiency."*

Jori Ringman, Director General – Cepi (Confederation of the European Paper Industries)

**Notes to editor:**

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*For more information on Industry commitments, please consult*

*[Cepi's Sustainable Product Pledge,](#)*

*[Cepi's Pledge to support the 3 billion trees initiative.](#)*

*[The 4evergreen cross-industry alliance.](#)*

*For our latest industry statistics, please refer to*

*[Cepi Key Statistics 2021](#)*

**About Cepi:**

*Cepi is the European association representing the paper industry. We offer a wide range of renewable and recyclable wood-based fibre solutions to EU citizens: from packaging to textile, hygiene and tissue products, printing and graphic papers as well as speciality papers, but also bio-chemicals for food and pharmaceuticals, bio-composites and bioenergy. We are a responsible industry: 85% of our raw materials are sourced in Europe and certified as sustainable, 92% of the water we use is returned in good condition to the environment. We are the world champion in recycling at the rate of 71.4%. At the forefront of the decarbonisation and industrial transformation of our economy, we embrace digitalisation and bring 21 billion value addition to the European economy and €4.5 billion investments annually. Through its 18 national associations, Cepi gathers 490 companies operating 885 mills across Europe and directly employing more than 179,000 people.*

*More information about our sustainability performance [here](#).*