

Article – Covid-19: EU recovery plan should include fight climate crisis



The current health crisis and its consequences remain the immediate priority, but the European Parliament is also focusing on a strategy for the post-crisis period.

In a [resolution adopted on 17 April](#), MEPs said the EU needs a massive recovery and reconstruction package with the [Green Deal](#), a series of initiatives to make Europe's economy sustainable, at its core to stimulate the economy and fight [climate change](#).

Impact on carbon emissions

During the strict quarantine measures implemented across Europe, air pollution has declined due to reduced traffic and other economic activities. Major European cities have registered major decreases in nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentration, some by half.

The closure of offices, shutdown of industry and huge decline in travel have cut CO₂ emissions. In the first quarter of 2020 it is expected to have cut demand for electricity as well.

Due to expectations about falling electricity demand and industrial activity, the price for allowances in the [EU Emission Trading System](#) fell by 40% between mid-February and mid-March 2020.

EU Climate Law

On 28 November 2019, the Parliament [declared a climate emergency](#) and called for all relevant EU legislation to be in line with the aim of keeping global warming to under 1.5°C.

The European Commission outlined the Green Deal in December, followed in March by a proposal for an EU Climate Law to make the EU [climate neutral by 2050](#).

In January, Parliament called for [more ambitious emission reduction targets](#) than those proposed by the Commission to ensure the EU can meet the goal.

In a [meeting held by Parliament's environment committee](#) on 21 April, Frans Timmermans, the Executive Vice-President of the Commission, said that the [timetable](#) for the EU Climate Law remains unchanged and promised a revised reduction target proposal for 2030 in September.

The Climate Law must be approved by the Parliament and the Council of Ministers before it can come into effect. Parliament wants the EU should adopt these targets well in advance of the COP26 UN Climate change conference, which has been postponed until 2021 due to the pandemic.

Find out what [measures the EU has taken](#) to combat the pandemic.