

EU elections can send strong climate change message, says EREF

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News

The European Renewable Energies Federation (EREF) says the EU-wide elections this week can send a “clear and strong” message about the need for political action against climate change.



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The Federation said the elections carry “particular significance” due to the social and political climate in Europe with the rise of right-wing and conservative politics.

But they are also important, it says, because of the “increase in citizen demand” for efforts to tackle climate change.

It warns that a large number of the current MEPs, many of whom it says are allies to renewables, are

expected to be replaced in the 23-26 May elections.

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On Monday the EREF said, “The larger European political groups have differing and heterogenic views when it comes to their attitude towards renewables.”

“Some groups are comprised of national parties who are all in agreement in ranking renewables high in their priorities, some groups are comprised of national parties who both do and do not prioritise renewables, while other groups do not regard the development of renewables as a priority.”

EREF has produced a report which, it says, partly provides “visibility” on new candidates and their stance on renewables.

It also outlines the position on green issues adopted by the main political groups.

“The larger European political groups have differing and heterogenic views when it comes to their attitude towards renewables” **European Renewable Energies Federation**

It said, “We look forward to welcoming both the new and incumbent MEPs to Brussels and urge them to push for courageous climate and renewable energy policies.”

The report says the Greens/ European Free Alliance presents the “most ambitious manifesto in terms of fighting climate change and prioritising renewables.”

“Their agenda revolves around an ecological transition and stepping up EU climate action by raising the 2030 climate target to a reduction of at least 60 percent greenhouse gas emissions and implementing a ‘Green New Deal’ to become a net-zero emission and 100 percent renewables-based economy before 2050,” it adds.

The European United Left/ Nordic Green Left, it said, “comes quite closely behind the Greens in terms of recognising climate changing and prioritising renewables.”

“Their ‘Climate Emergency Manifesto’ adopted in April 2019 mentions that the EU must urgently revise its 2050 long-term carbon-neutral strategy and focus on climate justice and a 100 percent renewables-based energy system.”

Turning to the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, the report says that Parliament’s second biggest group supports the recently-adopted Clean Energy Package but also states that it wishes to ‘achieve more’.

The report says, “It supports a transition to a sustainable and decarbonised economy based on energy efficiency, renewable energies and smart infrastructure. It proposes to harness the clean energy transition in order to provide stable and accessible jobs to European citizens.”

“The group strongly prioritises combatting energy poverty and proposes to do this by prioritising a roll-out of clean energies at the small and medium scale and with a focus on providing energy for the energy poor.”

“Relating to energy, the S&D also supports a safe supply of gas and decreasing the EU’s dependency on energy imports by increasing energy efficiency, increasing its share of renewables and interconnecting energy grids in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible.”

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, meanwhile, supports the creation of the Energy Union and purports to champion renewable energies, energy efficiency and decentralised renewable energy production and distribution, but mentions few specific measures as to how to achieve this.

“Concretely, the group proposes to increase the EU GHG emissions reduction to target to 55 percent by 2030 with a view to becoming carbon neutral by 2050 with a ‘highly efficient’ energy system ‘fully based on renewables’. It also proposes to strengthen the ETS by extending it to cover more sectors such as transport in an upstream model and end fuel tax exemptions for international aviation.”

The European People’s Party’s manifesto mentions the need to “significantly” reduce the environmental impacts of the European economy.

It plans to do this by reconciling protecting the environment with a dynamic economy, says the report.

About the author

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