(English version)

Question for written answer E-002202/24
to the Commission
Piotr Müller (ECR)
(21 October 2024)

Subject: Ecology and the energy transition — extending the operation of coal units in Poland

Ecology and the energy transition are very important topics in Poland. As a Member of the European Parliament, it is important to me that the necessary changes in the areas concerned are made in a way that fits in with Poland's specific circumstances and real needs.

Poland's Ministry of Climate and Environment has informed the public that it will be extending the operation of a number of coal units by organising supplementary auctions that are to take place between July 2025 and September 2028. This decision has apparently been provisionally accepted by the Commission.

In this connection:

1. Does the Commission confirm the reports from the Polish Ministry of Climate and the Environment concerning the extension of the operation of coal units?

2. In view of this decision, which is necessary for the Polish economy, can we expect the Green Deal to be comprehensively adapted to bring it into line with the new reality in which the rapid elimination of coal from the energy mix is not possible and what changes is the Commission considering in this regard?

3. Are there plans to reform the ETS2 system? Many experts take the view that the ETS2 system has an adverse impact on the economies of countries such as Poland, placing burdens on companies with high emission costs. If this is the case, what course of change is the Commission considering?

The environment needs to be protected in a sustainable way, with the needs of the economy and the need to ensure energy security being taken into account. I look forward to receiving a detailed reply on this matter.

Submitted: 21.10.2024

Answer given by Mr Hoekstra on behalf of the European Commission
(19 December 2024)

According to Regulation (EU) 2019/943 on the internal market for electricity, Member States can request a derogation, until end-2028, from current rules which limit the participation to capacity mechanisms to generation capacities meeting the CO_2 emissions thresholds defined by Article 22 (4).

In order to benefit from the derogation, Poland must submit a request to the Commission, subject to the conditions under Article 64 (2b), (2c) and (2d) of the regulation.

Derogation requests under Article 64 (2b) of Regulation (EU) 2019/943 can be consulted on the Commission's website ([1]). Stakeholders can also send comments to be taken into account in the context of the Commission's decision on a request for derogation, following relevant procedures and timeframes.

Member States have the right to determine their choice between different sources in their energy mix under Article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) while at the same time, pursuing the requirements and objectives of the European Climate Law and of the EU legislation adopted under that same Article of the TFEU, including the Renewable Energy Directive.

They are also obliged to set their concrete ambitions and commitments, including on the fulfilment of energy and climate targets, in their National Energy and Climate Plans (NECP) under the Governance Regulation.

Poland communicated its coal phase out commitment in its draft NECP in autumn 2023 and set the deadline for coal phase out for the year 2049. The Commission has not yet received its final NECP ([2]).

Regarding the Emissions Trading System 2, there are no plans to reform the system, which will start in 2027. The start of the system can be postponed until 2028 in the case of exceptionally high gas or oil prices in 2026 ([3]).

([1]) https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/markets-and-consumers/wholesale-energy-market/access-infrastructure-exemptions-and-derogations_en
([2]) INFR(2024)2260 — Launched in November 2024.
([3]) See Article 30k of Directive 2003/87/EC.