(English version)

Question for written answer E-000416/25
to the Commission
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(30 January 2025)

Subject: Changes to Commissioner Jørgensen's mission letter

Considering that the Energy and Housing Commissioner, Dan Jørgensen, as stated in the updated version of his mission letter, has been entrusted with the responsibility of establishing a new target for renewable energy to be achieved by 2040;

Taking into account that this update was introduced after the parliamentary approval of the Commissioner, without prior political consultation;

Recalling that the principle of technological neutrality is a fundamental policy pillar that ensures an equitable and science-based approach to decarbonisation;

Recalling that such a principle entails the full use of all available technologies, including low-carbon technologies such as nuclear energy and particularly small modular reactors (SMRs), and provides greater energy supply security while protecting industrial competitiveness;

Can the Commission explain:

1. Why a political debate was not held prior to the above-mentioned modification to Commissioner Jørgensen's mission letter;

2. Whether it plans to adopt an integrated approach to include specific and complementary targets for low-carbon technologies, in order to ensure a realistic and sustainable pathway toward decarbonisation;

3. What measures it intends to promote to encourage the development and application of nuclear technologies such as SMRs, in line with the need for diversification of energy sources and the need to promote the industrial growth of the EU.

Submitted: 30.1.2025

Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(10 June 2025)

The communication on the 2040 climate target ([1]) and its Impact Assessment confirm that all zero and low carbon solutions, including renewables and nuclear, are necessary to decarbonise the energy system by 2040.

A greater share of renewables in 2040 is thus necessary to meet our climate goals in the most cost-effective way, while enhancing energy independence and affordability.

During his hearing on 5 November 2024, the Commissioner for Energy and Housing set out his intention to propose a renewable energy target for 2040, which has been reflected in his Mission Letter ([2]).

The Commission will then work on this proposal with all the energy stakeholders and in close cooperation with all Member States, in view of supporting investor predictability, innovation and market growth for clean technologies.

As reaffirmed by the Commissioner for Energy and Housing ([3]), it is also important to ensure technology-neutrality when decarbonising our economy, in line with the Treaty.

As announced in the Affordable Energy Action Plan ([4]), the Commission will assess investment needs in an updated Nuclear Illustrative Programme and the possibility of streamlining permitting and licensing practices for the deployment of new nuclear technologies such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

([1]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52024DC0063.
([2]) https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/1c203799-0137-482e-bd18-4f6813535986_en?filename=Mission%20letter%20-%20JORGENSEN.pdf.
([3]) https://hearings.elections.europa.eu/documents/jorgensen/jorgensen_verbatimreporthearing-original.pdf.
([4]) https://energy.ec.europa.eu/publications/action-plan-affordable-energy-unlocking-true-value-our-energy-union-secure-affordable-efficient-and_en.

The European Industrial Alliance on SMRs was launched to facilitate the deployment of the first SMRs in the EU by early 2030s. The Commission will continue to support the work of the Alliance.