

2018-04

# HOW DO YOU SPEED UP ENERGY TRANSITION?

Opinion on implementation of the Energy Transition for Green Growth Act (LTECV)"

The Energy Transition for Green Growth Act (LTECV) adopted in 2015 gave concrete expression to the determination to decrease greenhouse gas emissions fourfold by 2050. It sought to accelerate development of renewable energies, see that major efforts are made with regard to energy efficiency, especially in buildings, and promote energy sobriety by encouraging households and businesses to modify their behaviour. Three years on, the ESEC has made an initial assessment of its implementation.

## RESULTS SO FAR ARE BY NO MEANS ENCOURAGING

Despite the many initiatives that have been developed, the French economy is not yet on a trajectory that has any hope of achieving the desired objectives. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions increased once again in 2015 and 2016. There has been no improvement as far as transport is concerned, there is a long way to go before energy renovation goals in the housing and business real-estate sector are achieved, and France is still one of Europe's most backward countries in terms of deployment of renewable energies. Resources assigned to energy transition are still inadequate and their stability is by no means guaranteed.

## MANAGEMENT AT NATIONAL LEVEL CANNOT BE CALLED OPTIMAL

There are a good many bodies involved, but there is no clear interaction between them. No decisions were made on such problematic issues as nuclear energy and agrofuels during initial planning procedures. Monitoring of indicators is inadequate and does not enable corrective measures to be taken. This is above all the case with regard to skills, qualifications and vocational training, a key factor in transition. And finally, there are almost no means of ensuring coherence between directions taken at local, regional and national level.

## TERRITORIES ARE HAVING A HARD TIME ASSUMING THEIR ROLE

The LTECV acknowledged the key role that territories play in energy transition. But local authorities have not been provided with the extra resources required to play their part. There is even cause to fear that, in a context of increased budgetary restraint, they will find it difficult to continue with their actions regarding building renovation, development of public transport, deployment of renewable energies and setup of the Public Service for Energy Efficiency of the Living Environment (SPPEH) provided for by the LTECV.



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## THESE OBSERVATIONS HAVE LED THE ESEC TO RECOMMEND:

### 1) SETTING REALISTIC GOALS IN ALL ESSENTIAL AREAS AND KEEPING TO THEM

- Regarding production of nuclear electricity, an area not covered in the first Multiannual Energy Programme (PPE), a plan must be drawn up enabling achievement of the 50% nuclear electricity goal by 2035. With regard to transport, greater priority should be given to alternatives to individual road transport (public transport, carpooling, road-rail transport, telecommuting, etc.) and to more specific study of various energy carriers, gas in particular, with a view to deploying the corresponding supply infrastructures throughout the territory. Finally, agricultural and food supply issues are of key importance both as regards achievement of carbon neutrality by 2050 and development of a sustainable bioeconomy. As yet, these aspects have received little attention and we need to make up for lost time.

### 2) PROVIDING RESOURCES APPROPRIATE TO THE CHALLENGE IN STABLE AND FORESEEABLE FASHION

- The ESEC requests that the twenty billion euros promised in the context of the Grand Plan for Investment (GPI) be increased to thirty-five billion. But it is above all essential that public funding and schemes are ongoing in order to ensure a clear, stable framework. In this regard, the ESEC proposes that discussions should be held on providing energy transition with a programming law of the kind that covers public finance. It would also be useful to make an accurate assessment of the effectiveness of the many existing support mechanisms in order to rationalise them. We also need to rationalise national-level consultation structures and develop ways of harmonising programmes set up at regional level with the goals provided for by the National Low-Carbon Strategy (SNBC) and the PPE. Finally, there should be debate at European level to enable funding assigned to combating climate change to be excluded, under certain conditions, from so-called Maastricht public deficit and debt criteria.

### 3) PREPARING TO UNDERTAKE EFFECTIVE RENOVATION OF BUILDINGS

- There is urgent need to deploy a Public Service for Energy Efficiency of the Living Environment (SPPEH) throughout the territory, providing it with permanent funding to the tune of €3 per household per year. We also need to speed up universalisation of single funding offers (OUFs) and remove existing obstacles to third-party financing. Support schemes should give greater encouragement to reliable overall renovation, with absolute priority given to elimination of uninsulated “thermal sieves” occupied by poor households. A substantial effort must be made to help professionals upgrade their skills. Realistic goals by category of building and by territory should be set and adhered to. Incentives and obligations must also be progressively strengthened, in particular when changes are made and for business real-estate. Finally, the State should set the example by renovating its own buildings effectively and with all due speed, and helping local authorities do the same.

### 4) REMOVING OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGIES

- The significant delay in deploying renewable energies (REns) is connected with much longer approval timelines than elsewhere in Europe, too much red tape, and problems with connection to grids that delay adaptation to less centralised energy production. Without losing sight of budgetary and environmental constraints, more effort should be put into facilitating deployment of various forms of renewable energy and, in particular, into doubling the heat fund. There should be greater encouragement of projects including the participation of inhabitants and/or local authorities, with a view to their accounting for 15% of REN projects by 2030.

### 5) FACILITATING COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

- It would seem essential to provide regions and Public Intermunicipal Cooperation Establishments (EPCIs) with dedicated resources for energy transition via a percentage of the Climate Energy Contribution (CEC). Concession-granting local authorities and those responsible for Territorial Climate-Air-Energy Plans (PCAETs) should also be given a greater say in orientation of development of energy grids across their territories. Development of a dynamic fabric of companies of all sizes working on various aspects of energy transition should also be facilitated, ensuring that all schemes and calls for tenders are accessible to one and all. The transition's employment and vocational training aspects should be taken full account of, by implementing the Employment and Skills Programming Plans (PPECs) provided for by the LTECV at national and regional level as well as in the main activity sectors.