

Overview: National coal phase-out announcements in Europe

Coal phase-out status December 2017

Many national governments have already announced their intention to phase out coal. This document gives an overview of such plans in Europe. Following an announcement, governments need to implement it, through setting coal plant closure dates and just transition plans. These actions need to be in line with Europe’s climate, environmental and health responsibilities, and address the needs of the affected workers, communities, and regions.

Overview

Country		Coal phase-out status, December 2017
Austria	Coal free by 2025	<p>Considering phase out by 2020.</p> <p>The companies operating the last two coal plants in Austria will phase-out coal by 2018 and 2025, respectively. Austria signed on to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u>, and as part of that <u>will look into phase out by 2020.</u></p>
Belgium	Coal free since 2016	<p>Belgium is the first, and so far only, formerly coal-burning EU member to have become coal power free. The <u>last coal plant closed in March 2016.</u> It was not an announced government policy objective, but resulted from the progressive closure of ageing power plants covered by EU pollution control regulations. Belgium has signed on to the Power Past Coal Alliance.</p>
Bulgaria	No phase-out under discussion	<p>Bulgaria still does not have a long-term energy strategy and a coal phase-out is currently not being discussed. Old and polluting coal power plants are still in operation. The government relies on derogations to keep the power plants active and avoids taking responsibility for just transition actions.</p>
Croatia	No phase-out under discussion	<p>Croatia has two relatively small hard coal units, one of which was scheduled for closure in the end of 2017 to comply with Croatia’s EU accession treaty. But in November 2017 a notice appeared on the Ministry of Environment's website saying that the operator is applying to</p>

		prolong the unit's permit. If this is granted, Croatia will be in breach of its accession treaty.
Czech Republic	No phase-out under discussion	There are significant pollution control challenges for ageing power plants in the Czech Republic. The need for a lignite region transition is becoming recognised.
Denmark	Phase-out announced	Coal phase-out by 2030. Ørsted (formerly DONG) has <u>announced it will cease coal use by 2023</u> , leaving a number of CHP plants which are considering closure prior to 2030. Denmark signed on to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> declaring to phase out coal by 2030. However, the Danish green NGOs ask to set a date of 2025 for a national coal phase-out as 2030 is too unambitious.
Finland	Phase-out announced	Coal phase-out by 2030. In November 2016, as part of its "Energy and Climate Strategy for 2030 and Beyond," the Finnish government introduced a ban, with some <u>exemptions, on coal use in energy production by 2030</u> to the Finnish Parliament. A legal ban would make Finland the first country in the world to enshrine a coal phase-out decision in national law: In August 2017, the Finnish Government announced that it will <u>put forward such a coal phase-out law</u> in 2018. Finland also signed on to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .
France	Phase-out announced	Coal phase-out by 2022. France <u>had committed to a coal phase-out by 2023</u> under the previous administration but has not yet introduced policy measures to deliver it. <u>President Macron has reconfirmed this commitment</u> , bringing it forward to 2022 <u>and mentioned 2021</u> his speech at the 2017 UN climate summit. Policy measures are now awaited. In order to address the issue of just transition, the French government will introduce a "transition contract" with the affected regions in 2018. France is a signatory of the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .
Germany	Phase-out under discussion	With around 50 GW of open coal capacity, Germany is burning way too much coal. If the country doesn't see significant cuts, in the form of plant closures in the near future, it will not be able to meet its 2020 climate target. Following the 2017 elections, coalition talks are ongoing, which include discussions on measures to reduce coal power.

		In October 2017, Berlin was the first Bundesland of Germany to <u>pass a coal phase-out law</u> , putting an end to coal heat and power in that region by 2030.
Greece	No phase-out under discussion	Greece has ageing power plants that should shut under EU pollution control laws. Despite their <u>unfavourable economics</u> , admitted to even by the <u>CEO</u> of the Public Power Corporation, the Greek government is supporting proposals for new lignite power plants, intending to have Greece burn coal until after 2050.
Hungary	No phase-out under discussion	Hungary has a limited coal and lignite power plant capacity. It could be an early mover in Eastern Europe. However, the government advertises coal as domestic “energy security” in its public statements.
Ireland	Possibly coal free by 2025	Not a proactive government policy. According to the <u>Draft Irish Climate Plan</u> , the only coal plant in Ireland, Moneypoint, will come to the end of its operating life in 2025. Decisions on the future of Moneypoint will be taken before 2020.
Italy	Phase-out announced	Coal phase-out by 2025. In October 2017, the Italian government announced a coal phase-out by 2025 as part of the National Energy Strategy. The Strategy was signed on 10 November. However, it is non-binding. <u>Italy has to implement the phase-out through executive measures</u> . Italy is a signatory to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .
Netherlands	Phase-out announced	Coal phase-out by 2030. In October 2017, the incoming Dutch government announced in its <u>coalition pact that all coal-fired power plants will shut by 2030</u> . Three of the five remaining plants in the country have only recently been completed, meaning that they will operate for less than half of their expected lifetime. The Netherlands is a signatory of the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .
Poland	No phase-out under discussion	Ageing coal power plants are facing a big challenge to meet air pollution requirements. Six new units are under construction. The Polish mining sector is facing significant economic pressures. The government is backing coal but market forces are shifting. The EU 2030 climate goals and energy market framework may help accelerate transition.

Portugal	Phase-out announced	<p>Coal phase-out by 2030.</p> <p>In November 2016 the <u>Portuguese environment minister confirmed that the power plants in the country will stop burning coal before 2030</u>. This was <u>reaffirmed in October 2017</u> when launching the roadmap to 2050 carbon neutrality. The Portuguese plant Sines is one of the most climate harming coal plants in the EU. Portugal is a signatory to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u>.</p>
Romania	No phase-out under discussion	Ageing coal power plants are facing the big challenge of meeting air pollution requirements. One unit has been planned since 2013, to be constructed in partnership with a Chinese investor, but little has been done since. The Romanian mining sector is facing significant economic pressures. The government is backing coal but market forces are shifting.
Slovakia	No phase-out under discussion	Slovakia has relatively limited coal power plant capacity. It could be an early mover in Eastern Europe. The governing coalition has been positive on climate action.
Slovenia	No phase-out under discussion	Slovenia added in 2016 a new coal power plant to the grid which is expected to operate until 2054.
Spain	No phase-out under discussion	Spain has massive overcapacity and high potential for renewable energy production. It could retire coal plants without impacting its energy security. A set of old coal plants is due for retirement by 2020 because of EU pollution legislation. Yet the <u>Spanish government</u> and other forces are pushing for them to remain open, although <u>Iberdrola</u> wants to close theirs. There has been continuous state aid for coal power plants as well as state subsidies for domestic coal production, but mines are due to lose their subsidies by 2018.
Sweden	Coal free by 2022	<p>Not a proactive government policy.</p> <p><u>Sweden intends to be among the first fossil fuel free industrialized countries in the world. The last coal plant in Sweden will close by 2022.</u> Sweden is member of the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u>.</p>
Turkey	No phase-out under discussion	Turkey <u>officially announced</u> an <i>increase</i> in coal-fired capacity to 30 GW by 2023. Currently, over 60 GW of new coal capacity are in the development pipeline, <u>the third largest new coal risk globally</u> . Around 20 of the 60 GW pipeline belongs to state utilities EÜAŞ and Turkish Coal Enterprise. <u>EÜAŞ</u> has been trying to make these lignite assets attractive for investors through generous state subsidies, exemptions/privileges,

		land allocations, and price&purchase guarantees. Retrofit processes are ongoing, expanding the capacity and lifetime of <u>the country's oldest and dirtiest plants</u> that are supposed to be retired.
UK	Phase-out announced	<p>Coal phase-out by 2025.</p> <p>Announced just prior to the 2015 Paris climate meeting, the UK was the first country in the world to announce a coal phase-out policy. The UK government is still working on putting it into legislation.</p> <p>The coal fleet is already halved from around 30 GW in 2010 and by 2016 the coal share had fallen to 9% of the electricity mix.</p> <p>The UK government also committed to slashing gas generation, with 85% of UK generation targeted as zero-carbon, by 2032, in its Clean Growth Strategy published in October 2017. The UK initiated the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> together with Canada.</p>
Western Balkans	No phase-out under discussion	<p>The region is faced with a threat of 8 GW of new coal fired capacity (one plant of 430 MW was just announced recently), with 1.7 GW being actively pursued and permitted. A staggering 6.3 GW of coal plant capacity is not yet permitted or permits have expired and not renewed, however it all remains in official plans. Bosnia-Herzegovina is a hot spot for Chinese export of coal technologies with 5 coal-fired power plants (2.1 GW) under loan consideration by China's policy banks, and has recently added a new 300 MW plant to the grid in 2016.</p> <p>In terms of pollution control, the existing plants in the region are expected to be compliant with EU pollution laws only by 2028, while the current average fleet age is over 40 years.</p>
Cyprus	No coal in electricity mix.	
Estonia	No coal in electricity mix.	
Iceland	No coal in electricity mix.	
Latvia	No coal in electricity mix.	Signatory to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .

Lithuania	No coal in electricity mix.	
Luxembourg	No coal in electricity mix.	Signatory to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .
Malta	No coal in electricity mix.	
Norway	No coal in electricity mix.	No coal apart from one plant in <u>Longyearbyen</u> .
Switzerland	No coal in electricity mix.	Signatory to the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> .