This document provides an overview of country coal phase out announcements and plans in Europe. Once governments announce a coal phase out they then need to set about implementing it, which means confirming closure dates at plant level and producing plans for a managed just transition away from coal. These actions need to be in line with climate, environmental and health responsibilities, and must address the needs of affected workers, communities, and regions. To be in line with the UN Paris Climate Agreement European and OECD countries need to be coal-power free by 2030 at the latest.

22 European countries have announced they will phase out coal

- Coal phase out announced for 2030 or earlier
- Late coal phase out (after 2030)
- Coal phase out under discussion
- No official coal phase out discussion
- No coal in the electricity mix

Timeline of country coal phase out plans

Breakdown of country coal phase out plans

- No coal ever in the energy mix
- Coal free since Paris Agreement
- Coal free by 2030
- Coal free after 2030
- Coal phase out under discussion
- No coal phase out discussion
- No official coal phase out discussion
- No coal in the electricity mix
### The United Kingdom becomes the world's first country to announce a coal phase out (2025).

Belgium becomes the first formerly coal-burning country in Europe to go coal free.

France's President Emmanuel Macron brings the country's coal phase out forward to 2022. It's later enacted under the country's 2019 energy and climate law.

Austria's last coal plant brings its closure date forward to 2020.

France's President Emmanuel Macron brings the country's coal phase out forward to 2022. It's later enacted under the country's 2019 energy and climate law.

The operator of Austria's last coal plant announces a plan to close it by 2025.

The operator of Sweden's last coal plant announces a plan to close it by 2025.

The operator of Italy's last coal plant without a closure date announces a plan to close it by 2025.

### 2016

The Finnish government announces a plan to ban burning coal to produce energy by 2030. It's passed into law in 2019.

Denmark joins the Powering Past Coal Alliance, thereby committing to phase out coal by 2030.

The Netherlands' incoming government announces a plan to phase out coal by 2030. It's passed into law in 2019.

Portugal’s Minister for Environment announces a plan to phase out coal by 2035.

### 2017

France’s President Emmanuel Macron brings the country’s coal phase out forward to 2022. It’s later enacted under the country’s 2019 energy and climate law.

The operator of Sweden’s last coal plant announces a plan to close it by 2022.

France’s president François Hollande announces a plan to phase out coal by 2023.

Austria’s operator of Austria’s last coal plant without a closure date announces a plan to close it by 2025.

### 2018

The UK brings its coal phase out forward to 2024.

Poland confirms it will maintain its desperately late 2049 hard coal phase out date. Signatories to the statement agreed that their transition away from coal should be consistent with the Paris Agreement, which requires all European countries, including Poland, to exit coal by 2030.

### 2019

Hungary’s president, János Áder, announces a plan to phase out coal by 2030.

Slovakia’s new environmental strategy includes a plan to phase out coal by 2030.

Germany’s coal commission recommends a Paris Agreement incompatible 2038 coal phase out that is subsequently passed into law in 2020.

### 2020

Czechia announces 2033 coal phase out.

Romania announces a 2033 coal phase out in its National Resilience and Recovery Plan.

Bulgaria announces a 2038-40 coal phase out in its National Resilience and Recovery Plan.

Portugal closes last coal plant (Pego) becoming fourth European country to go coal free.

### 2021

Croatia announces it will phase out coal by 2033 at the latest at COP26.

Poland signs Global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement at COP26, but later claims developing country status despite being the world’s 23rd biggest economy. Poland confirms it will maintain its desperately late 2049 hard coal phase out date. Signatories to the statement agreed that their transition away from coal should be consistent with the Paris Agreement, which requires all European countries, including Poland, to exit coal by 2030.

Portugal closes last coal plant (Pego) becoming fourth European country to go coal free.

### 2022

Hungary brings its coal phase out forward to 2025.

Denmark’s last coal plant will close in 2028, thereby bringing the country’s phase out date forward by two years.

Greeces’s only coal operator PPC’s swifty announces plans to close all its existing plants by 2025, leaving only its first under-construction Ptolemaida V coal plant scheduled to burn lignite until 2025.

North Macedonia announces a 2027 coal phase out.

Spain announces a 2030 coal phase out.

Montenegro announces a 2035 phase out.

Austria and Sweden become the second and third countries in Europe to go coal free, with Sweden doing so two years earlier than planned.

### Timeline of Developments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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AUSTRIA: COAL FREE SINCE 2020
Austria was Europe's second country to exit coal, closing its last two coal plants in 2019 and 2020 respectively. The Austrian coal phase out was not government driven. In January 2018, Austrian environment minister, Elisabeth Köstinger, announced that the country would phase out coal by 2020, but the goal was missing from the country's energy strategy published shortly after and no measures were taken to ensure it.

BELGIUM: COAL FREE SINCE 2016
Belgium was Europe's first country to exit coal, with its last coal plant closing in March 2016. It was not an announced government policy objective, but rather resulted from the progressive closure of ageing coal plants impacted by EU pollution laws by 2028, while the current fleet is old and in breach of existing pollution limits.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: NO COAL PHASE OUT DISCUSSION
Bosnia-Herzegovina is still planning new coal power plants. It is a hotspot for China's exportation of coal technologies, with several coal plant projects under loan consideration by China's policy banks. The existing plants are only expected to be compliant with EU pollution laws by 2028, while the current fleet is old and in breach of existing pollution limits.

BULGARIA: COAL PHASE OUT 2038-40
In October 2021, the Bulgarian government announced that the country will phase out coal in 2038 or 2040. In its National Resilience and Recovery Plan submitted to the European Commission, Bulgaria's coal industry is on the brink of collapse with an estimated one billion euro of upgrades required to bring it in line with EU emission standards. Bulgaria's late phase out date leaves it falling far short of its responsibilities on climate change and will delay crucial investments in renewable energy projects and retraining schemes for workers, which are needed to transition to a future without fossils. Old and polluting coal power plants are still in operation. The government relies on derogations from EU laws to keep them operating and avoid taking responsibility for just transition actions.

CROATIA: COAL PHASE OUT 2033 OR EARLIER
Croatia joined the Powering Past Coal Alliance on 30 June 2021 as a non-declaration member with a commitment to work with the Powering Past Coal Alliance to set a coal phase out date in the near future. Croatia has two relatively small hard coal units, one of which was scheduled for closure at the end of 2017 to comply with the conditions under which Croatia became an EU member state. Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković used his opening address at the COP26 climate meeting in Glasgow to announce that his country will phase out coal by 2033 at the latest.

CZECHIA: COAL PHASE OUT BY 2033
In August 2019, a multi-stakeholder coal commission was established to assess the possibility of a coal phase out in the Czechia. Delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, in December 2020, the commission recommended a 2038 coal exit. The new Czech government adopted a 2033 coal phase out in January 2022.

DENMARK: COAL PHASE OUT BY 2028
In November 2017, Denmark became one of the first signatories to the Powering Past Coal Alliance, declaring it would work to phase out coal by 2030. All Danish coal plants now have individual closure dates, the latest being Nordjylland, which is scheduled to close in 2028. In 2017, Ørsted (formerly DONG) became the first Danish utility to announce a coal exit and by 2023, Ørsted CEO Henrik Poulsen launched the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit to state that the company will stop using coal from 2021 onwards. The only other remaining operational combined heat and power (CHP) plant, Fyns Fjernvarme, will close in 2022.
Following a year-long period of pressure from civil society groups to end coal, in October 2018, the Finnish Government introduced new measures to reduce coal-fired power generation. On May 2, 2019, with the parliament finally adopting the energy and climate law, which sets the retirement of all coal plants by 2030, Finland became the first EU country to formally introduce a ban on coal. In doing so, Finland is following the lead of South Africa, which makes it the second country to introduce a ban, immediately after South Africa. Following this, the situation in the EU looks much brighter than it did just a few years ago. In November 2016, France introduced a legislative proposal to ban the use of coal in power generation. In October 2018, the Finnish Government introduced new measures to reduce coal-fired power generation. On May 2, 2019, with the parliament finally adopting the energy and climate law, which sets the retirement of all coal plants by 2030, Finland became the first EU country to formally introduce a ban on coal. In doing so, Finland is following the lead of South Africa, which makes it the second country to introduce a ban, immediately after South Africa. Following this, the situation in the EU looks much brighter than it did just a few years ago.
IRELAND: COAL PHASE OUT 2025

In March 2018, the Irish minister for climate action announced that Ireland would be joining the Powering Past Coal Alliance, and will end coal power use by 2025. At the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, Ireland’s prime minister Leo Varadkar confirmed this date. In addition, a ban on smoky coal (for domestic heating) came into full force in 2019. In July 2018, the Irish parliament passed a bill to sell the country’s shares in coal, peat, oil and fossil gas, making Ireland the world’s first country to divest from all fossil fuels.

ITALY: COAL PHASE OUT 2025

In October 2017, the Italian government announced a coal phase out by 2025 as part of its National Energy Strategy. The plan is in line with the Paris Agreement, but is non-binding meaning Italy must implement the plans through executive measures. Italy’s prime minister Giuseppe Conte confirmed this date in the 2019 Italian Energy Action Plan.

KOSOVO: NO COAL PHASE OUT DISCUSSION

With the cancellation of the New Kosovo coal project, Kosovo no longer has any new coal plants in the pipeline. The remaining plants aren’t expected to be compliant with EU pollution laws until 2028, while the current fleet is old and in breach of existing pollution limits.

MONTENEGRO: COAL PHASE OUT 2035

Montenegro joined the Powering Past Coal Alliance on 30 June 2021 with a plan to phase out coal by 2035. The plan is not compatible with the Paris climate agreement, but does not need to meet the Powering Past Coal Alliance’s 2030 declaration date because Montenegro is a non-OECD country. With the cancellation of the new Ploče coal power plant, Montenegro no longer has any new coal plants to worry about and is closing its existing fleet of coal power plants and connecting it to a district heating network. In February 2020, the country introduced a cap and trade system for its major CO2 emitters.

NETHERLANDS: COAL PHASE OUT 2029

In October 2017, the incoming Dutch government announced in its coalition pact that all of the country’s coal-fired power plants will be shut by the end of 2029. Three of the country’s five remaining plants only entered operation in either 2015 or 2016, meaning that they will operate for less than half of their expected lifetime. In May 2018, the Dutch government announced a legal ban on electricity production from coal to enter into effect on 1 January 2030, and it was passed into law in December 2019.

In December 2019, the Dutch Supreme Court confirmed the Urgenda verdict, obliging the Dutch government to reach a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (relative to 1990). In early 2020, the Dutch government proposed 54 potential extra measures, including closing one of the three remaining coal plants ahead of the 2029 phase out date, and downsizing production. In September, the climate minister called on the operators of the plants to investigate the cost of their closures.

NORTH MACEDONIA: COAL PHASE OUT 2027

North Macedonia became the first Western Balkan country to announce a Paris-compliant coal phase out when it joined the Powering Past Coal Alliance on 30 June 2021, opening up a new theatre in Europe’s coal exit. The country’s ambitious 2027 date is complemented by plans to construct 100MW of solar renewable capacity on disused open pit mines at its Oslomej coal plant complex.

POLAND: NO COAL PHASE OUT DISCUSSION

Poland’s coal industry is in a dire state with its utilities having lost approximately 50% of their share price over the past five years. Despite this, Poland is set to receive EUR 14 billion in coal capacity payments from the public purse, and Poland is still bringing new coal plants online and planning new lignite mines. The government plans to restructuring the energy sector with a spin-off of coal assets, and it recently announced that it will try to keep its state-owned coal mining company (Polska Grupa Węglowa) operating until 2049, using state aid to keep it afloat. Consequently, a credible coal phase out discussion on a national level in Poland has yet to start. Poland’s Wielkopolska region, however, is bucking the trend, and has committed to phase out coal by 2030.

Poland signs Global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement at COP26, but later claims developing country status despite being the world’s 23rd biggest economy. Poland’s declaration was received with derision from the international community, with the European Commission’s president, Ursula von der Leyen, dismissing it as a “bitterly disappointing” example of a country failing to meet its responsibilities.

Poland’s coal exit is not consistent with the Paris Agreement, which requires all European countries, including Poland, to exit coal by 2030.
SERBIA: NO COAL PHASE OUT DISCUSSION

Serbia is still planning the construction of new coal power plants including recently revived plans to press ahead with the 350MW Kolubara B lignite project with the help of Chinese partners. It is also constructing a new unit at Kostolac power plant. Its existing plants are only expected to be compliant with EU pollution laws by 2028, while the current fleet is old and in breach of existing pollution limits.

ROMANIA: COAL PHASE OUT 2032

Romania has confirmed in its National Resilience and Recovery Plan (NRRP) submitted to the European Commission that it will exit coal by 2032. The NRRP states that Romania will pass a law covering the closure and conservation of mines, retraining of workers, and socio-economic measures to support affected coal communities by the second quarter of 2022.

SLOVAKIA: COAL PHASE OUT 2030

The environmental policy strategy of the Slovak Republic published in February 2019 includes a coal phase out by 2030. In a joint statement in June 2019, newly inaugurated president Zuzana Caputova and then prime minister Peter Pellegrini announced that the country will stop burning coal to produce electricity by the end of 2023. Later that year, Slovakia also joined the Powering Past Coal Alliance. Interestingly, the country only has combined heat and power (CHP) coal plants and the Low-Carbon Development Strategy states that “the decommissioning of Vojany and Nováky [the two largest coal CHP plants] is expected in 2025 and 2023, respectively.” Moreover, there is another coal CHP plant, Teko 1, which does not have a retirement date. Slovakia needs to clarify its phase out date for coal power and heat, and it should be by 2025 at the latest.

SPAIN: COAL PHASE OUT 2030

Spain finally confirmed its long awaited coal phase out when it joined the Powering Past Coal Alliance on 30 June 2021. While Spain’s 2030 end date lacks ambition, the closure of its coal plants and mines has been well under way since the government confirmed its world-leading just transition strategy in 2018. The country should now aim to have its coal exit wrapped up by 2025 at the latest. Seven coal plants stopped operating on 30 June 2020 as they were unable to comply with stricter EU air pollution standards, which applied as of Q3/2020. In March 2020, Spain submitted its final energy and climate plan (NECP) to the European Commission, which implies a phase out of coal by 2030. However, closure announcements and generation trends indicate that Spain will be coal power free by the mid-2020s or even earlier.

In February 2019, the Parliament of the Balearic Islands approved a Law on Climate Change and Energy Transition that sets an end date for coal in the Balearics. The island’s last coal power plant, Alcúdia, will close by 2025 if an interconnector cable with mainland Spain is built and coal run on low-operating hours until then. With the end of hard coal mining subsidies in the EU in 2018, 28% of the 24 coal mining units scheduled to close ceased operation by 31 December 2018. This was made possible through the just transition deal the government struck with coal regions.
UNITED KINGDOM: COAL PHASE OUT 2024
The UK became the first country in the world to announce a coal phase out policy, laying out the plan ahead of the 2015 Paris climate meeting. The UK government confirmed its intended regulatory approach in January 2018, but is still working on putting it into legislation. It is considering an emission limit on coal power stations from October 2025 onwards. Prime minister Boris Johnson has since brought the coal exit forward to 2024 in the run-up to COP 26. Since the UK introduced a carbon tax for power plants in 2013, installed coal capacity and coal power generation has fallen sharply. In February 2020, England announced its intention to phase out house coal and wet wood for burning at home by 2023.

SWEDEN: COAL FREE SINCE 2020
The last coal plant in Sweden was long planned to close by 2022, but in December 2019 the operator announced it would close the plant two years early, thereby making Sweden the third European country to exit coal. Sweden intends to be among the first fossil fuel-free industrialised countries in the world.

TURKEY: NO COAL PHASE OUT DISCUSSION
Turkey has the world’s fifth largest pipeline of new coal power plant projects, and is yet to initiate a coal phase out discussion. One of the key players in the development of new coal in Turkey is state utility EUAŞ, which has been trying to make lignite assets attractive for investors by offering generous state subsidies, exemptions, land allocations, and price and purchase guarantees. Retrofitting of coal plants is also widespread, expanding the capacity and lifetime of some of the country’s oldest and dirtiest plants. However, Turkey’s parliament unanimously voted to ratify the UN Paris climate agreement in October 2021, and President Erdogan confirmed his support for the plan, as well as a 2053 net zero target for Turkey, at the UN General Assembly. This marks a major shift in Turkey’s climate policy, and effectively rules out any significant long-term future for coal.

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