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Editorial: What's green inside the latest State of the European Union

By Willy De Backer*, senior consultant

At her first State of the European Union speech delivered on 16 September 2020, President von der Leyen showed a valiant effort to demonstrate Europe's resolve to put itself on a strong new path in the midst of the global emergencies of the corona pandemic, runaway climate chaos, accelerating biodiversity loss, failed globalisation, geo-political disorder, new authoritarian populism and rising social inequalities.

"The future will be what we make it. And Europe will be what we want it to be" is the voluntaristic motto written on top of the State of the Union webpage of the European Commission. Europe "has the vision, the plan, the investment" to "become green, digital and more resilient", is the story Ursula von der Leyen tried to convey with energy and determination. [Read more](#)

The EU budget deal - tension between Covid recovery and the Green Deal?



The European Union is facing huge uncertainties. The Covid-19 health crisis is far from over with countries struggling to prevent or halt a second wave, and their economies digesting the worst recession since the Great Depression. At the same time, the global climate emergency is intensifying and leading to further social

inequalities. The EU and its member states are clearly struggling to balance policies to stop the economic fall-out of Covid with the priorities of the green and digital transitions promised by the von der Leyen Commission.

[Read more](#)

Covid-19: is there something to learn from a pedagogical point of view?

The Covid-19 crisis and the climate emergency demonstrate that the world of education needs innovative approaches of learning to handle global issues such as climate change and sustainable development. That is why the ETUI's Education Department developed a new programme based on a framework of 5 "green competences".

Franklin Kimbimbi explains this approach in this Medium blog post [here](#)

Interview: three questions for Ludovic Voet

Ludovic Voet is confederal secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation. His responsibilities at the ETUC cover sustainable development and climate change, migration, youth policy, non-standard work and the platform economy, education and training, and equality and non-discrimination, plus organising.

Q: You just launched a [new guide](#) for trade unions related to adaptation to climate change. What do you mean by adaptation to climate change, and what are the sectors most at risk?

To deal with climate change, we have two possible strategies that are complementary. We can try to prevent these changes from happening by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and we can try to adapt to those changes. Adaptation means taking action to prevent or minimize the damages that climate change can cause. [Read more](#)

Social partners and the European Green Deal

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) wrote a letter to the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission to ask for urgent meetings with the aim to discuss how to reinforce the social partners' involvement in the design, governance and implementation of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and the Recovery Plan, at both European and national levels. ETUC also insists on ensuring that respect of social dialogue, collective bargaining and workplace democracy are binding conditions for funding. [Read more](#)

GreenReads: citizens' climate assemblies - strategic foresight report

Britain and France have asked citizens to develop ideas

and recommendations for future climate policies. These "citizens' climate assemblies" are rapidly becoming a useful tool for governments to get buy-in for the difficult policymaking of the Social-Ecological Transition. The French "Citizens' Convention for climate" ([Convention citoyenne pour le climat](#)) consisted of 150 citizens chosen from a pool of randomly selected citizens. Such a group was asked to formulate proposals to reduce French emissions of greenhouse gases by at least 40 % compared to 1990, in a spirit of social justice. The Citizens' Convention presented [149 recommendations](#) for President Macron on 21 June 2020.



[Read more](#)

Publications, trainings and webinars



ETUI

[A socially just transition through the European Green Deal?](#)

The new ETUI-OSE working paper written by Sebastiano Sabato and Boris Fronteddu aims to provide a preliminary assessment of whether the European Green Deal constitutes a suitable policy framework to combine environmental and economic objectives with the pursuit of social fairness, thus ensuring a just transition towards more sustainable economies and societies.

Download the publication [here](#)

Education [Webinar on the practice of green competences](#) (watch the trailer).

Training programmes revolving around climate change and sustainable development based on an original approach called "green competence framework" developed by ETUI's Education Department.

Webinars and replays

- [Webinaire: Comment garantir une relance verte et juste?](#) In partnership with the Jacques Delors Institute
- [Webinar - It takes two to tango: how to jointly analyse social and environmental policies?](#) In partnership with the European Climate Foundation (ECF). The ETUI-ECF will continue to develop similar actions on environmental issues in the coming months to build a European network and stimulate the debate around these topics.
- [Webinar: The promises and challenges of the](#)

[carbon border adjustment mechanism](#)

- [Webinar: A crisis within a crisis: the European Green Deal back on track after Covid-19?](#)

European Parliament Think Tank

Documenting climate mainstreaming in the EU budget - making the system more transparent, stringent and comprehensive

This study examines the current methodologies used for tracking climate-related and biodiversity-related expenditure in the EU budget. It identifies strengths and weaknesses of the current methodologies and examines proposed changes to the methodologies for the 2021-2027 financial perspective. On this basis, it identifies potential objectives for strengthening the tracking mechanisms, and puts forward suggested approaches to meeting those objectives.

Bruegel

Greening the recovery by greening the fiscal consolidation

by McWilliams, B., S. Tagliapietra and G. Zachmann

In the wake of Covid-19, some economic recovery policies will help green the economy? for example, energy renovation of buildings. But there are limits to the share of stimulus that can be explicitly green. The European Union should therefore also green the fiscal consolidation by setting out the path to much higher carbon prices than today. This would guide investment and provide revenues to help the fiscal consolidation.

InterEconomics

Great Green Transition and Finance

By Kemfert, C., Sch?fer, D. & Semmler, W.

The reconstruction programme needs to initiate the great green transition. The transformation from a climate-distorting to a climate-protecting economy opens up investment opportunities and points to financing needs comparable with those necessary for the rebuilding of the European economy after World War II. The great green transition is a unique chance to pursue policies for a new and sustainable growth regime.

VividEconomics

Green Stimulus Index

The Green Stimulus Index (GSI) assesses the effectiveness of the Covid-19 stimulus efforts in ensuring an economic recovery that takes advantage of sustainable growth opportunities, and builds resilience through the protection of the climate and biodiversity.

Green agenda

- Mid-October 2020: Chemical strategy for sustainability
- End of October 2020: Commission Work Programme 2021

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