

## Climate Law

### The first step towards carbon neutrality

Europe's flat glass sector is working in the climate neutrality direction provided by the European Green Deal published on 11 December 2019. The European flat glass sector takes it as its role to produce at a competitive price the materials essential for renovating Europe's buildings, for supporting the clean mobility transition and for increasing the share of renewable solar energy in Europe. **While already providing net carbon-avoidance products, the flat glass sector is looking into ways to massively scale up its contributions to the carbon neutral transition**, including by developing novel ways to lower its industrial emissions.

The European Green Deal announces an unprecedented transformation of the European economy which requires certainty and predictability to bring all EU actors on board. Therefore, setting the **climate neutrality objective by 2050 in law is a logical initial step** to set the long-term direction and steer all relevant policies. Ultimately, it is the measures to attain the objectives to be set in the climate law which will matter the most.

While the climate law roadmap published by the European Commission considers that setting intermediary targets could "facilitate" the achievement of the 2050 climate-neutrality, Glass for Europe believes that intermediary targets are most important at sectoral level to define the expected contribution of each sector of the economy to the overall reduction objective. The European Union, its' Member States, economic actors and citizens need to have a clear understanding of where efforts need to be focused on the short, medium and long term. Attention should also be paid to the **credibility of the intermediary objectives** which is **directly linked to the availability of technologies and infrastructures, magnitude of the changes required** (e.g. legislative, business model, consumer behaviour), **and time to proceed to adaptations**. In the event that the reduction objective for 2030 was to be reviewed, the new overall target and sectoral objectives shall be defined in a socially-fair and cost-efficient manner taking into account the limited time left to proceed to adaptations.

The **sequencing of the transition measures will also be crucial**. For instance, the availability of low-carbon energy sources needs to be guaranteed for an industrial actor to rely solely on this energy source for its operations. Infrastructures need to be available to provide certainty and secure investments in the transition. A second element calling for a well-designed sequencing of the actions is that the **carbon budget left is limited**. In the sectors where solutions to decrease emissions are already available and offer a high reduction potential, such as the building sector, actions should be undertaken without undue delay. The objective of doubling the renovation rate should be made legally binding and the minimum performance requirements of building components upgraded to avoid carbon lock-in. In the sectors where solutions are not yet available, measures are urgently needed to unlock new CO<sub>2</sub> savings reduction potentials; such as the support to research and the development of infrastructures.



*Glass for Europe is the trade association for Europe's flat glass sector. Flat glass is the material that goes into a variety of end products, primarily in windows and facades for buildings, windscreens and windows for automotive and transport as well as solar energy equipment, furniture and appliances. Glass for Europe brings together multinational firms and thousands of SMEs across Europe, to represent the entire building glass value-chain. It is composed of flat glass manufacturers, AGC Glass Europe, Guardian, NSG-Group and Saint-Gobain Glass Industry, and works in association with national partners gathering thousands of building glass processors and transformers all over Europe.*

\*\*\*

