

Luxembourg city clean electricity

"Anyone who thinks climate change isn't happening is living on another planet," prime minister Xavier Bettel said during a press conference announcing the draft update yesterday (17 April).

A citizens' climate council was convened by the government last year. The Klima-Bürgerrot (KBR) brought together a representative sample of 100 people living or working in Luxembourg. It asked them to discuss Luxembourg's current climate plan and see if it should be extended.

"Extraordinary situations require exceptional measures," PM Bettel said when announcing the council's launch. "It is time for an innovative democratic project that has not yet taken place in Luxembourg in this form. It is time to bring society to the table in climate policy negotiations."

The people's assembly "came out in favour of even more ambitious targets and measures for Luxembourg," according to a government statement, and helped shape the stronger NECP.

The strengthened measures reflect "the political will of the government" too, the statement says. It stresses that the draft update is a collaborative effort across different departments.

This isn't the first time that a European country has given its citizens a platform on climate issues. Established in 2016, Ireland's Citizen's Assembly made several recommendations for a fair transition, that ultimately fed into the country's landmark Climate Action Plan in 2019.

All Luxembourgers will have a say on the final plan, as the draft is now open to public consultation until 16 May. As in 2022, citizens, NGOs and lobby groups can submit their feedback on the government portal.

Wind is already well on track; set to reach its 2030 target by 2025. As analysis by clean energy think tank Ember shows, Luxembourg saw the biggest increase in wind share of any EU country between 2015 and 2022. A rise of nearly 20 per cent took it to a 26.9 per cent share of electricity last year.

As for overall emissions, the statement claims that Luxembourg was already on track in the last round of NECP submissions in 2020, so there is no need to revise its climate targets.

Whether the small, wealthy Grand Duchy of Luxembourg could be doing more to drive down emissions is up for debate. It is still off course to reach net zero by 2050 - the other key target set by Brussels which NECPs are meant to address.

Among the most "innovative" of the 197 proposals is a bid for the "social leasing" of electric cars that would benefit low-income households. And the creation of a national entity to support energy renovation in leaky



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homes.

Foregrounding the need for a "just transition", the draft plan will continue to raise the country's CO2 tax. Introduced in 2021, this requires companies that emit greenhouse gases over a certain limit to pay a tax - partly allocated to help poorer families adapt and partly invested in green energy projects.

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