

Warning that EU climate change policies could hamper nuclear energy's role in cutting CO2 emissions, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and four other EU countries have sent a letter to the European Commission (EC). In the letter, the countries said the EU should do more to put nuclear energy on a level footing with other low-carbon technologies in climate policies, including the sustainable finance rules. They are concerned that the member state's right to choose between different energy sources and the right to determine the general structure of the energy supply is currently heavily limited by EU policy making, which excludes nuclear energy from more and more policies. The letter was signed by the officials of France, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Last December, EU leaders agreed to cut net greenhouse gas emissions at least 55 % of 1990 levels by 2030 - a goal the Commission says will require extra energy sector investments of 350 billion euros a year this decade. While nuclear technologies are eligible for EU research funding, the letter says a focus on technologies that will take decades to become commercially viable risked sidelining near-term projects.

EU member states are divided over nuclear energy, which produces about a quarter of EU electricity from the 13 states that use it. Supporters promote its low CO2 emissions, while opponents raise concerns over hazardous waste, and the delays and increasing costs of recent projects. France generates around 70 % of its electricity from nuclear, nuclear accounts for 56 % of Slovakia's generation, 48 % in Hungary and 35% in Czech Republic, while Poland intends to build NPPs to reduce its dependency on coal.