

According to European Commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen, the new goal for emissions-reduction is to lower emissions in the bloc from the current 40 % target by 2030 relative to 1990 levels and raise it to a 55 % target.

The existing 40 % objective was adopted six years ago, but last year EU emissions were only around 25 % below 1990 levels. The EC's new 55 % target proposal now requires the approval of both the Parliament and the Council.

The level will put the European Union firmly on track to climate neutrality by 2050 and to meeting the Paris Agreement obligations, Von der Leyen stressed, adding that the world would be able to keep warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius if others follow the lead.

Emissions declined by 25 % since 1990 while the EU economy expanded by more than 60 %. She vowed to support hydrogen technology and work on the goal to install one million charging points for electric vehicles. According to her, buildings must become less wasteful, less expensive and more sustainable, and the construction sector can even be turned from a carbon source into a carbon sink, if organic building materials like wood and smart technologies such as artificial intelligence are applied.

Regarding Western Balkan region, Von der Leyen said that the EC would soon present an economic recovery package for the region focusing on a number of regional investment initiatives. As for the planned carbon border adjustment mechanism, which is essentially a CO₂ tax, she said that it should motivate foreign producers and EU importers to reduce their carbon emissions, while ensuring that the playing field is leveled in a way compatible with the rules of the World Trade Organization.