



Deutscher Bundestag

# The Committee on Climate Action and Energy

Informationen in englischer Sprache



**New  
2023  
version**  
20th electoral term



“Without affordable, renewable energy, prosperity will be out of reach for future generations. Pressing forward with the energy transition, not just in technological terms, but in a socially equitable way, is therefore one of the most important projects in this electoral term. Wind and solar energy must be massively expanded, together with the necessary power lines, while a market ramp-up is needed in the hydrogen sector. The newly established Committee on Climate Action and Energy will prepare the legislation underpinning all of these areas. A social and environmental restructuring of the energy sector is the only way to protect our climate effectively.”



Klaus Ernst, The Left Party  
Chairman of the Committee on  
Climate Action and Energy

The German Bundestag's decisions are prepared by its committees, which are established at the start of each electoral term. Four of them are stipulated by the Basic Law, the German constitution: the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Defence Committee, the Committee on European Union Affairs and the Petitions Committee.

The Budget Committee and the Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure are also required by law. The spheres of responsibility of the committees essentially reflect the Federal Government's distribution of ministerial portfolios. This enables Parliament to scrutinise the government's work effectively.

## **The committees of the German Bundestag**

The German Bundestag sets political priorities of its own by establishing additional committees for specific subjects, such as sport, cultural affairs, human rights or tourism. In addition, special bodies such as parliamentary advisory councils, committees of inquiry or study commissions can also be established. The committees are composed of members of all the parliamentary groups, reflecting the balance of these groups in the German Bundestag. The distribution of the chairs and deputy chairs among the parliamentary groups also reflects their relative strengths in the plenary. In the current electoral term, the committees have between 19 and 49 members.

The committees discuss and deliberate on items referred to them by the plenary. They also have the right to take up issues on their own initiative, allowing them to set priorities in the parliamentary debate. When necessary, they draw on external expertise – usually by holding public hearings. At the end of a committee’s deliberations – especially on bills and motions for which it is the lead committee – it adopts a recommendation for a decision and a report, which serve as the basis for the plenary’s decision.







For the first time in the German Bundestag's history, a Committee on Climate Action and Energy has been established in the 20th electoral term. Energy policy was previously part of the remit of the then Committee on Economic Affairs and Energy. Now a dedicated committee has been set up for this issue and for climate action. The SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP parliamentary groups, which form the governing coalition in the current electoral term, included the following commitment in their coalition agreement:

## **The Committee on Climate Action and Energy**

“Achieving the Paris climate targets is a top priority for us. Climate action safeguards freedom, justice and sustainable prosperity. The social market economy must be placed on a new footing as a socio-ecological market economy. We will create a regulatory environment which paves the way for innovations and measures to put Germany on a trajectory to keep warming to 1.5 degrees.”

In line with this pledge, the Federal Government has undertaken to place the energy transition at the heart of its agenda. The challenge is to reconcile the triad of energy-policy goals: climate and environmental compatibility, security of supply, and affordability. The focus is on expanding renewables, including the necessary supply networks, and boosting energy efficiency, especially in buildings.

To this end, it is necessary to create the appropriate legal foundations for the energy sector, industry, licensing authorities and the public, or to update existing legal regulations. The Committee on Climate Action and Energy deliberates on bills from this policy field that are introduced by the Federal Government, by the Bundesrat, or “from the floor of the Bundestag”. When needed, the Committee draws on external expertise by holding hearings of experts, and consults those affected by draft legislation to hear their views. At the end of its deliberations, the Committee submits a recommendation to the plenary of the Bundestag to adopt the bill – potentially in an amended form – or to reject it. The Bundestag as a whole then votes on these recommendations.

10		SPD
9		CDU/CSU
5		Alliance 90/The Greens
4		FDP
4		AfD
2		The Left Party

Number of members: 34

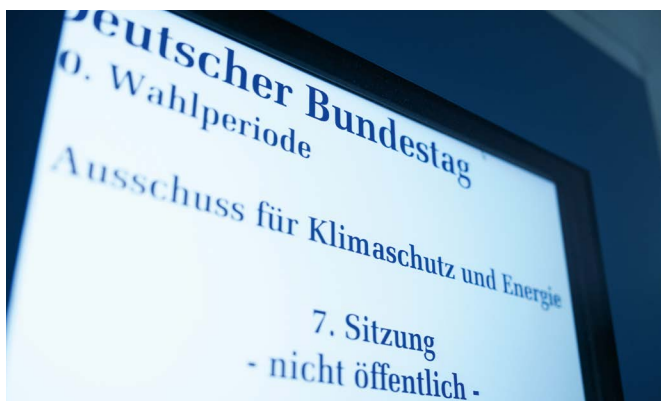
Chairman: Klaus Ernst, The Left Party

Deputy Chairperson: Not yet elected, AfD

In addition to its deliberations on legislation, the Committee on Climate Action and Energy cooperates with the Committee on Economic Affairs to scrutinise the work of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. Under the chairmanship of Klaus Ernst (The Left Party), the 34 members of the Committee – many of them young parliamentarians who have been elected to the Bundestag for the first time – closely monitor how climate targets are being implemented in our society and economy, and what legal and political parameters companies need to make Europe and Germany more competitive as a place to do business, with the aim of safeguarding jobs and creating new ones. Federal Minister Dr Robert Habeck or a representative attends the Committee's meetings to answer its questions.

In view of the Putin regime's war on Ukraine, another key issue is the urgent strategic need to reduce the dependence of the European Union and Germany on energy imports from Russia, while at the same time securing energy supplies.

In the last electoral term, the then Committee on Economic Affairs and Energy accomplished a remarkable amount of work in the field of energy policy. It was the lead committee in deliberations on 26 bills (such as the Electric Mobility Infrastructure in Buildings Act and the Act Amending the Offshore Wind Energy Act), 63 motions





(for example on the hydrogen union), several statutory instruments (including on interruptible loads) and 171 EU items of business. Special mention should be made of one of the biggest pieces of legislation: the Act to Reduce and End Coal-Fired Power Generation and to Amend Further Acts (the Coal Phase-out Act), which is linked to the Structural Strengthening Act for Mining Regions. Several hearings were held on this subject. The Committee members also met representatives of the regions concerned, for example experts from regional development corporations and ministries at Land level, as well as mayors of towns in the Lusatian, Rhenish and Central German coal-mining districts.

Going forward, the Committee on Climate Action and Energy will continue to play a role in achieving climate targets, advancing the energy transition, seizing the opportunities for growth and competition offered by renewables, achieving a high level of employment, strengthening small and medium-sized businesses, promoting new technologies, or balancing economic and environmental objectives. In addition to discussing the items of business referred to it, the Committee takes up issues arising within its remit on its own initiative. These are topical issues of climate and energy policy on which the Federal Government briefs the Committee, including the sovereignty of German and European decisions on energy policy or the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, which is intended to help safeguard the competitiveness of European and German businesses.



## The Committee's work in practice

The Committee's members have to closely examine a large number of bills, motions and communications from the Federal Government in preparation for their deliberations. In addition to actively participating in committee meetings and plenary sittings, the parliamentarians regularly meet delegations from foreign parliaments and governments who are visiting Germany. Furthermore, meetings are regularly held with representatives of the European Commission and the European Parliament. Delegation trips in weeks when the Bundestag is not sitting are also part of the Committee members' work.

Financial affairs, the environment, health, demographic trends, social affairs, transport, building and urban development, education, or research: all of these issues are connected to economic activity and public services. The people of Germany and the German economy require energy in the form of electricity, gas and heating. The Committee on Climate Action and Energy will work together with the Bundestag's other committees to create the legal framework to ensure that energy suppliers, together with the state, provide this energy in a secure and affordable manner. It is collaborating closely with the Committee on Economic Affairs on this issue. In the context of energy supplies, politicians specialising in environmental issues also have a role to



play, for example to balance species conservation and biodiversity with the goals of the energy transition. And when it comes to tax incentives for expanding the role of renewables, the Committee members consult the Bundestag's politicians specialising in financial policy. The Committee will be working on decarbonising transport in partnership with the Committee on Transport. Meanwhile, the members of the Committee on European Union Affairs are in demand in discussions on the transposition of European law into national legislation. All of these issues appear on the agenda for the Committee's meetings, which take place on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 13:00 hrs in weeks when the Bundestag is sitting. Extraordinary meetings are held as

required. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Committee is still holding hybrid meetings, with in-person meetings being combined with virtual formats. The topics are, in many respects, highly technical and require the Committee's members to study documentation in detail in preparation for the deliberations. When necessary, the Members consult external experts at public hearings – on the subject of wind and solar projects pursued by citizens' energy companies, for example, or when it comes to the route of power lines. To scrutinise the government's work, the Committee also requests detailed reports from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, including reports on the immediate action programmes under the Federal Climate Change Act or the Federal Government's report on the implementation of the National Hydrogen Strategy.



Klaus Ernst,  
The Left Party  
Chairman  
Trade union secretary,  
b. 1 Nov. 1954  
in Munich.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2005



Deputy Chairperson  
yet to be elected,  
AfD  
Deputy Chairperson



## Committee members

The 34 members of the Committee on  
Climate Action and Energy

Dr Nina Scheer,  
SPD  
SPD group coordinator  
Lawyer, political  
scientist, musician,  
b. 11 Sep. 1971  
in Berlin.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2013



Dr Thomas Gebhart,  
CDU/CSU (substitute  
member)  
CDU/CSU group  
coordinator  
Political scientist,  
business administrator,  
b. 20 Dec. 1971  
in Kandel.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2009



Lisa Badum,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
group coordinator  
Political scientist,  
b. 2 Oct. 1983  
in Forchheim.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Olaf in der Beek,  
FDP  
FDP group coordinator  
Self-employed,  
b. 31 July 1967  
in Bochum.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Karsten Hilse,  
AfD  
AfD group coordinator  
Police officer,  
b. 12 Dec. 1964  
in Hoyerswerda.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Ralph Lenkert,  
The Left Party, The Left  
Party group coordinator  
Toolmaker, state-  
certified mechanical  
engineering technician,  
b. 9 May 1967  
in Apolda.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2009



Sanae Abdi,  
SPD  
Development  
cooperation project  
manager,  
b. 7 July 1986  
in Tétouan (Morocco).  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Bengt Bergt,  
SPD  
Works council  
chairman, technical  
translator and author,  
b. 7 May 1982  
in Luckenwalde.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Timon Gremmels,  
SPD  
Political scientist,  
b. 4 Jan. 1976  
in Marburg.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Markus Hümpfer,  
SPD  
Engineer,  
b. 17 Mar. 1992  
in Schweinfurt.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Helmut Kleebank,  
SPD  
Nurse, teacher,  
b. 18 Nov. 1964  
in Berlin.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Andreas Mehlretter,  
SPD  
Economist,  
b. 10 Dec. 1991  
in Moosburg an der Isar.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Robin Mesarosch,  
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Parliamentary adviser,  
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in Herrenberg.  
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Andreas Rimkus,  
SPD  
Master electrician,  
b. 24 Dec. 1962  
in Düsseldorf.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2013



Katrin Zschau,  
SPD  
Regional trade union  
secretary,  
b. 29 June 1976  
in Greifswald.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Dr Hans-Peter  
Friedrich,  
CDU/CSU  
Lawyer,  
b. 10 Mar. 1957  
in Naila, Upper  
Franconia.  
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Fabian Gramling,  
CDU/CSU  
Bank clerk,  
b. 5 Apr. 1987  
in Stuttgart.  
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Thomas Heilmann,  
CDU/CSU  
Lawyer,  
b. 16 July 1964  
in Dortmund.  
Bundestag Member  
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Mark Helfrich,  
CDU/CSU  
Business administrator,  
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Bundestag Member  
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CDU/CSU policy  
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Lawyer,  
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Jens Koeppen,  
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Business administrator,  
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Maria-Lena Weiss,  
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in Tuttlingen.  
Bundestag Member  
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in Cologne.  
Bundestag Member  
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Bernhard Herrmann,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Hydraulic engineer,  
b. 13 Jan. 1966  
in Luckenwalde.  
Bundestag Member  
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Alliance 90/The Greens  
policy spokeswoman  
Industrial engineer,  
b. 22 Dec. 1977  
in Schwäbisch Gmünd.  
Bundestag Member  
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Research assistant,  
b. 5 July 1982  
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Entrepreneur,  
b. 30 Dec. 1983  
in Hamburg.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Anikó Merten,  
FDP  
Art studies scholar,  
b. 25 Mar. 1982  
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Bundestag Member  
since 2021



In der deutschen  
Fassung Doppelname.

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Market researcher,  
b. 3 May 1977  
in Heidelberg.  
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Marc Bernhard,  
AfD  
Lawyer, business  
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b. 5 Feb. 1972  
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Bundestag Member  
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Steffen Kotré,  
AfD  
Engineer,  
b. 29 Apr. 1971  
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Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Dr Rainer Kraft,  
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Chemist,  
b. 8 Jan. 1974  
in Gräfelfing.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017





## Information online

The Committee on Climate Action and Energy  
[www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a25](http://www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a25)



Website for downloading and ordering  
the German Bundestag's information materials  
[www.btg-bestellservice.de](http://www.btg-bestellservice.de)



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The German Bundestag takes decisions on what are at times highly complex and controversial bills and parliamentary initiatives relating to the entire spectrum of policy fields. The committees play a central role in parliamentary deliberations. They are the forum where the Members thrash out compromises and draw on expert advice before submitting their reports and recommendations for decisions to be voted on by the Bundestag as a whole.

[www.bundestag.de/en/committees](http://www.bundestag.de/en/committees)



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