



By: Tomorrow's Affairs Staff

Will the reorganisation of political forces in the European Parliament bring down the Green Deal?



The President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, tasked the Patriots for Europe (PfE) group with reporting after the meeting of the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament, which **took place** in Strasbourg on 8 July.

At this meeting, following a proportional representation in Parliament, PfE was **tasked** with preparing the first draft position on the target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by 90 per cent by 2040 compared to 1990 levels.

This procedure, which is common in the allocation of complex dossiers, was a surprise, as PfE – an alliance of nationalist and Eurosceptic parties – was marginalised until a month ago and will now **lead** the crucial negotiations with the member states and the European Commission.

The Patriots for Europe are the third-largest political group in the European Parliament and were **formed** less than a year ago by an alliance of parties including the French National Rally, the Italian Lega, and the Hungarian Fidesz.

This alliance has earned a reputation as climate sceptics and Eurosceptics and is in favour of suspending the European Green Deal.

In practice, this means that the PfE will present the first draft of the parliamentary position, appoint a rapporteur, and conduct official negotiations with the governments of the EU member states.

The allocation of reporting competences in Parliament is usually based on a points system, with the largest political groups taking on the most important dossiers.

When the PfE even overtook the pro-European parties, this caused great surprise and dissatisfaction among the Greens and the Social Democrats. In their opinion, the "cordon sanitaire" **rule**, which excludes the far right from important decisions, has lost all meaning.

Although the rapporteur cannot formally block the initiatives of other groups, he has considerable procedural power. This power is reflected in the setting of the timetable, the timetable for amendments, and the selection of topics to be prioritised in the report.

In practice, this means that PfE can slow down or impede work on ambitious climate proposals, even if a delegate from another political group subsequently succeeds in pushing through a different text.

The change of climate course

On 2 July, the European Commission presented a **proposal** to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 90 per cent by 2040, with the possibility of purchasing a maximum of three percentage points of emission allowances from developing countries.

However, by **giving** Patriots for Europe the lead role, the focus of the negotiations shifted from an ambitious reduction to the protection of European industry. This is a clear sign that economic priorities are now determining the course of climate policy in Brussels.

The member states are taking different positions. France, through President Macron, called for the **delay** of ambitious targets and harmonisation with the Paris Agreement, while Poland and Hungary warned of high costs for energy-intensive sectors.

In Warsaw and Budapest, the PfE proposal is gaining support, as the governments fear that stricter regulation would jeopardise the competitiveness of the automotive and steel industries.

The success of this idea requires a two-thirds majority in the relevant committee and confirmation in plenary

On the **initiative** of the leaders of the European

People's Party, the Social Democrats, and the Greens in Brussels, the establishment of an intergroup team to propose a rapporteur from the ranks of the pro-European forces is being considered.

The success of this idea requires a two-thirds majority in the relevant committee and confirmation in plenary.

The complexity of the procedure and the opposition of MEPs, who warn that such a manoeuvre would undermine the stability of the political groups, are currently putting the brakes on the project.

At the same time, the announcement itself indicates that the pro-European centres of power are not prepared to keep quiet about the change of climate course forced by the PfE but want to regain the initiative.

EU climate policy at risk

Critics point out that by taking this step, the EU is distancing itself from its ambition to be a global leader in the fight against climate change.

A report published last week by the non-governmental organisation Transport & Environment (which deals with sustainable transport policy) warns that any **deviation** from the existing strategy, including lifting the ban on the sale of new fossil fuel vehicles starting in 2035, could threaten more than a million jobs and divert investment away from battery production.

According to the report, the removal of this ban would reduce the value of the automotive industry by around €90bn by 2035.

A negative outcome could deepen the fragmentation of European politics

PfE's decision to make the reporting process public further increases the pressure from a

powerful industry lobby. According to the EU Transparency **Register**, energy and metals organisations such as Eurofer and FuelsEurope, as well as the automotive and chemical associations ACEA and CEFIC, have disclosed lobbying costs of several hundred million euros per year.

In total, these sums amount to more than one billion euros in the last twelve months, which shows the extent to which financial resources for shaping climate policy are focused on the interests of industry.

A negative outcome could deepen the fragmentation of European politics. Instead of seeking compromises within large political groups, there are divisions along geographical and ideological lines.

For example, the Lega, with the support of the Chamber of Commerce of Milan, proposed exempting small and medium-sized enterprises from the new climate commitments, while the National Rally in France is calling for the emissions permit system to be extended to other industrial sectors.

Towards COP30

The further course of events depends on four key factors: how the PfE will organise the report, the reactions of the member states, the position of the European Commission, and the dynamics of the procedure in Parliament.

A series of bilateral meetings between the PfE rapporteur and EU Council ministers are scheduled for July and August, followed by trilateral meetings ("trilogues") between the Parliament, the Commission, and the Council.

If the PfE succeeds in including significant deviations from the European Commission's proposal in the report, these changes could form the basis for the EU's negotiating mandate in the run-up to the COP30 climate summit.



Should PfE persist in advocating for a more flexible report text, the crucial question is whether national governments will consent to this request - Roberta Metsola

In this case, a fierce debate between pro-European and Eurosceptic political groups would take place at the European Parliament's plenary session in autumn to vote on the final text of the report.

In parallel, the Council will have to confirm or adapt its position in line with the Parliament's new resolution. If a unified position is reached within the institutions, the EU can come to COP30 with a united goal.

Otherwise, there are two options: either more national blocs will emerge at the summit with different demands, or the Council and Parliament will have to initiate a new round of harmonisation, which in the worst case would jeopardise the EU's credibility before the international community.

In one of the possible scenarios, the EU would formally adopt a relaxed target with the possibility of buying credits, but the commitment to reduce emissions would be nominal rather than real.

This would maintain the appearance of climate leadership but would reinforce the criticism that the EU has become a bureaucracy without concrete results.

Another possibility is that pro-European groups in parliament manage to regain the initiative and break the PfE consensus, which would require a complex compromise between the Greens, the Social Democrats, and the centre-right.

Should PfE persist in advocating for a more flexible report text, the crucial question is whether national governments will consent to this request.

The Polish and Hungarian authorities have already expressed their willingness to extend the flexibility mechanisms, while countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, and Spain are ready to take action to protect not only their industrial interests but also the EU's reputation in the world.

The climate strategy dossier submitted to PfE represents a significant turning point in the European debate, and the coming months will show whether ambitious targets can be harmonised with economic pressure or whether particular interests will prevail.

A successful compromise will validate the EU's ability to implement a coherent and sustainable policy. Failure will leave room for further fragmentation and a decline in credibility within the institutions.

The outcome will also send a clear message to investors about the extent to which the Union is prepared to ensure the stability of the legal and regulatory framework.

This process will also be a test of the European institutions' willingness to protect the public interest in the face of strong lobbying pressure.