

Switch to sustainable batteries even more urgent after Ukraine crisis, EU lawmakers say

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By Charlie Drape and Kathryn Carlson

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A plenary vote is due on Thursday to determine the parliament's final stance on the European Commission's proposed Sustainable Batteries Regulation, setting the stage for negotiations with national ministers and the EU executive. Ministers are expected to agree a preliminary stance in mid-March, allowing final negotiations to start.

EU environment commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius, who put forward the legislative proposal, told lawmakers today that a new regulatory framework for the battery value chain is "more needed and urgent than ever before" in light of "Russia's unprecedented attack on Ukraine and the imperative of making Europe independent from fossil fuels".

The commission's proposal envisages rules to limit and reduce batteries' carbon footprints, introduce recycling targets and toughen obligations on responsible sourcing, and would apply to all manufacturers looking to sell products on the EU market.

The parliament's environment committee has proposed changes to include tougher requirements on due diligence, recycling and interoperability and to cover batteries for light vehicles such as e-scooters.

Referring to Russia's assault on Ukraine, Green lawmaker Malte Gallée argued that it has "never been so urgent as it has been in these past days and hours that we have to do absolutely everything to move away from fossil fuels," and that "batteries are a key technology in order to achieve this goal."

Centrist Renew lawmaker Dita Charanzová warned that "the impact of the war in Ukraine is everywhere, even in relation to batteries." Echoing the point, Green lawmaker Anna Cavazzini said: "The green transition is not only for the climate, we need it for our strategic autonomy." Batteries are a "keystone of this transformation," she added.

The commission published a plan yesterday to cut EU dependence on Russian fossil fuel imports by two-thirds by the end of this year, with a focus on boosting renewable energy production (see [here](#)).

Batteries will be key for the switch to a decarbonized energy system in the long term, with the EU anticipating the phaseout of internal-combustion-engine vehicles by 2035 and a consumer switch to battery-powered electric vehicles on the horizon.

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