



EEA Press release

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Recession and renewables cut greenhouse emissions in 2009

Greenhouse gas emissions decreased very sharply in 2009, by 7.1% in the EU-27 and 6.9% in the EU-15. These most recent results, compiled by the European Environment Agency (EEA), confirm estimates made by the EEA last year. This decrease was largely the result of the economic recession of 2009, but also sustained strong growth in renewable energy.

Professor Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, said: "Although much of the decrease in greenhouse gases is due to the recession, we are starting to see the results of many EU and Member States' proactive policies in renewable energy. We hope that policy makers continue to build on this success to cut emissions further."

The 2009 recession affected all economic sectors in the EU, leading to a decrease in energy demand. Consumption of fossil fuels fell compared to the previous year, mainly for coal, which in turn led to even steeper emission reductions. In relative terms, the largest emission reductions occurred in manufacturing industries and construction, and in public electricity and heat supply. Despite the relatively cold winter of 2009, emissions also fell in the residential sector.

Alongside falling energy demand linked to the economic recession, there was a strong growth in renewable energy deployment, particularly biomass, wind and solar, leading to a significant increase in the share of renewables in final energy in the EU. Primary energy consumption of renewables increased by 5.8% in the EU-27, according to Eurostat energy balances for 2009.

Key findings for 2009

- The economic recession and the increase of renewable energy in final energy consumption were the main factors behind the fall in emissions in 2009.
- In the EU-27, total GHG emissions decreased by 17.4 % in the EU-27 between 1990 and 2009 (974 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent, or CO₂-e). In line with [EEA estimates made last year](#), emissions decreased by 7.1 % (-355 million tonnes CO₂-e) between 2008 and 2009.
- In 2009, total GHG emissions in the EU-15¹ were 12.7 % (542 million tonnes CO₂-e) below the base year level. Emissions decreased by 6.9 % (274 million tonnes CO₂-e between 2008 and 2009.
- Emissions of GHGs from international aviation and shipping decreased by 8.6 % in the EU-27 between 2008 and 2009. These two sectors currently represent 6.3 % of total GHG emissions.

¹ The 15 Member States constituting the EU when the Kyoto Protocol was ratified. They have committed to reducing their collective emissions in the 2008-12 period to 8% below the level in their chosen base year. In most cases the base year is 1990.



MEMBER STATE	1990	Kyoto Protocol base year (a)	2009	2008–2009	Change 2008–2009	Change 1990–2009	Change base year–2009	Targets 2008–12 under Kyoto Protocol and "EU burden sharing"
	(million tonnes)	(million tonnes)	(million tonnes)	(million tonnes)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Austria	78.2	79.0	80.1	-6.9	-7.9%	2.4%	1.3%	-13.0%
Belgium	143.3	145.7	124.4	-10.7	-7.9%	-13.2%	-14.6%	-7.5%
Denmark	68.0	69.3	61.0	-2.7	-4.2%	-10.3%	-12.0%	-21.0%
Finland	70.4	71.0	66.3	-4.1	-5.8%	-5.7%	-6.6%	0.0%
France	562.9	563.9	517.2	-21.9	-4.1%	-8.1%	-8.3%	0.0%
Germany	1247.9	1232.4	919.7	-61.4	-6.3%	-26.3%	-25.4%	-21.0%
Greece	104.4	107.0	122.5	-6.0	-4.7%	17.4%	14.5%	25.0%
Ireland	54.8	55.6	62.4	-5.4	-8.0%	13.8%	12.2%	13.0%
Italy	519.2	516.9	491.1	-50.6	-9.3%	-5.4%	-5.0%	-6.5%
Luxembourg	12.8	13.2	11.7	-0.6	-4.7%	-8.9%	-11.3%	-28.0%
Netherlands	211.9	213.0	198.9	-5.7	-2.8%	-6.1%	-6.6%	-6.0%
Portugal	59.4	60.1	74.6	-3.4	-4.3%	25.5%	24.0%	27.0%
Spain	283.2	289.8	367.5	-37.2	-9.2%	29.8%	26.8%	15.0%
Sweden	72.5	72.2	60.0	-3.6	-5.6%	-17.2%	-16.9%	4.0%
United Kingdom	776.1	776.3	566.2	-54.0	-8.7%	-27.0%	-27.1%	-12.5%
EU-15	4264.9	4265.5	3723.7	-274.3	-6.9%	-12.7%	-12.7%	-8.0%
Bulgaria	111.4	132.6	59.5	-9.5	-13.8%	-46.6%	-55.1%	-8.0%
Cyprus	5.3	NA	9.4	-0.8	-7.7%	78.3%	NA	NA
Czech Republic	195.5	194.2	132.9	-8.2	-5.8%	-32.0%	-31.6%	-8.0%
Estonia	41.1	42.6	16.8	-3.2	-16.1%	-59.0%	-60.5%	-8.0%
Hungary	96.8	115.4	66.7	-6.4	-8.7%	-31.1%	-42.2%	-6.0%
Latvia	26.6	25.9	10.7	-1.2	-10.0%	-59.7%	-58.6%	-8.0%
Lithuania	49.6	49.4	21.6	-2.4	-10.1%	-56.4%	-56.3%	-8.0%
Malta	2.1	NA	2.9	-0.1	-4.7%	38.8%	NA	NA
Poland	452.9	563.4	376.7	-19.1	-4.8%	-16.8%	-33.2%	-6.0%
Romania	250.1	278.2	130.8	-22.6	-14.7%	-47.7%	-53.0%	-8.0%
Slovakia	74.1	72.1	43.4	-4.8	-9.9%	-41.4%	-39.8%	-8.0%
Slovenia	18.5	20.4	19.3	-1.9	-9.1%	4.7%	-5.0%	-8.0%
EU-27	5588.8	NA	4614.5	-354.5	-7.1%	-17.4%	NA	NA

(a) Cyprus, Malta and EU-27 do not have targets under the Kyoto Protocol and therefore do not have applicable Kyoto Protocol base years

Early indications of 2010 figures

The most recent data available for the EU GHG inventory is for 2009. Verified 2010 emissions from the EU-ETS point to a 3% emissions increase over the course of the year, which is still far below pre-recession levels. The EU ETS covers more than 12,000 power plants and manufacturing installations, or approximately half of all emissions. This rebound in emissions partly reflects the economic recovery.

About the report

The Greenhouse Gas Inventory is an annual report compiled by the EEA covering emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases from 1990 to two years before the current year. It is the official submission of the EU to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In autumn the EEA will publish early estimates for the 2010 emissions in the EU, and also a Trends and Projections report, looking ahead to assess progress against emissions targets.

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