

Energy Charter Treaty: withdrawal of the Union

2023/0273(NLE) - 24/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 560 votes to 43, with 27 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the withdrawal of the Union from the Energy Charter Treaty.

Parliament **gave its consent** to the withdrawal of the Union from the Energy Charter Treaty.

As a reminder, the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) is a multilateral trade and investment agreement applicable to the energy sector that was signed in 1994 and entered into force in 1998. The European Union is a Contracting Party to the ECT, together with Euratom, 23 EU Member States, as well as Japan, Switzerland, Turkey and most countries from the Western Balkans and the former USSR, with the exception of Russia and Belarus which signed the agreement in 1994 but never ratified it.

Eleven Member States (Germany, France, Spain, Netherlands, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Luxembourg, Denmark, Ireland, Portugal) and the UK, representing more than 70% of the European population, have already decided to exit the ECT. **The withdrawal of the EU is the next logical step.**

The proposed EU withdrawal from the Energy Charter Treaty is a result of years of mobilisation by numerous associations to exit a treaty that protects the financial interests of multinational fossil fuel corporations at the expense of regulatory autonomy and an effective social climate transition. In 2021, over 1 million European citizens called on EU countries “to pull out from the ECT”. Climate activists, trade unions, scientists, academics, and a broad number of social movements joined voices to expose the dangers of this treaty and repeatedly called on countries to exit. In addition, the European Parliament called for the withdrawal from the Energy Charter Treaty in its resolution of 24 November 2022 on the outcome of the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty.

In the absence of any substantial update of the ECT since the 1990s, a modernisation process was initiated in 2018. However, the proposed text of the modernised ECT fails to align with the Paris Agreement, the EU Climate Law, or the objectives of the European Green Deal.

Therefore, Parliament considers that remaining a Contracting Party to the ECT is not an option and subsequently welcomes the Commission’s proposal on the withdrawal of the Union from the Energy Charter Treaty.