

Quo Vadis EU ETS: Challenges and Solutions

Draft Agenda

** Speakers are being confirmed **

Date: March xx 23, 2026

Time: 16:00 – 18:00 CET, followed by reception

Venue: University Club, 11 rue d'Egmont, Brussels

ERCST, since its inception, has been a strong advocate of market solutions and economic instruments to address environmental challenges and find sustainable solutions. At the same time ERCST has also consistently emphasized that a strong and prosperous Europe requires a strong industrial base.

The EU finds itself now at an important inflection point: the Climate Law specifies very ambitious targets for 2040 and 2050, while industrial competitiveness is under significant pressure. This is reflected in the closure of installations, a lack of investments in energy-intensive industries, and increasingly significant job losses.

The EU ETS, as one of the key pillars of EU climate change policy has delivered an increasingly strong explicit carbon price, as well as a rising effective carbon price(cost) driven by the decreasing cap, the introduction of CBAM and strengthened benchmarks.

Leading to, and following the recent meeting in Antwerp, which focused on competitiveness and touched upon the EU ETS, there have been voices advocating strong measures such as pausing the EU ETS and/or the CBAM. Others, while agreeing that strong and urgent measures are needed, emphasize the need for measures that address the cost while preserving the flexibility and usefulness of the price signal. In Antwerp, industry demands seemed to focus on energy and carbon cost, especially as they relate to the adjustment in benchmarks.

This session is intended for a policy level discussion on the direction of the policy debate for the EU ETS ahead of the expected European Commission proposal in July 2026. The panel is invited to elaborate on the problems that need to be addressed, in the short and long term, but also how to address them and what are the broader consequences of their views on the way forward. Costs are emerging as a key issue, with the additional question of who bears the costs under different models.

The session will start with 5 min statements from the panelist followed with a moderated discussion among panelists but also engagement with the audience

16:00 – 16:05

Welcome and introduction

Andrei Marcu, Executive Director, ERCST

16:05 – 16:30

Initial statements by guest speakers

- Bea Yordi, Director, DG Clima, European Commission
- Diane Simiu, Director for Climate Change at the French Ministry of the Energy Transition, France
- Carsten Rolle, Head of Department, Energy and Climate Policy BDI
- Winston Beck, VP Group Public Affairs, Heidelberg Materials
- Nicola Rega, Executive Director Climate Change and Energy CEFIC
- Adolfo Aiello, Deputy Director General, Eurofer

16:30 – 17:14

Moderated discussion with panellists

17:15 - 18:00

Moderated discussion with audience

18:00

End of the meeting followed by reception