

Renewable Heat For All

A civil society manifesto for the future of heating and cooling in Europe



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As fossil gas prices have soared, millions have been left at even greater risk of energy poverty. **It has never been clearer that we need renewable, affordable energy for all.** The global energy prices crisis has exposed just how vulnerable Europe is to volatile international gas markets, given our dependence on imports for 90% of its fossil gas.

At the same time, Europe is facing a climate crisis: now is the time to accelerate the energy transition across our society. But not all tasks have the same degree of difficulty and emissions in the heating and cooling sectors are much easier to abate than in other sectors of our economy: renewable, non-emitting heating and cooling solutions have been on the market for years and are now mature technologies.

Besides this, Europe's reliance on fossil fuels in people's homes is also a risk for public health, contributing to damaging indoor air quality and urban air pollution. Addressing the climate crisis and this public health crisis go hand in hand.



Despite the worsening climate crisis and health risk, many European governments continue to subsidise and encourage the installation of fossil gas boilers and oil boilers. This short-sighted measure will lock households into expensive, polluting fossil fuels for decades to come.

It is time to end our dependence on fossil fuels, reject the false solutions that the fossil fuel industry proposes, and redirect support and policies to accelerate the deployment of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy solutions.

We believe that everyone should have the right to affordable and sustainable renewable energy to heat and cool our homes. We all deserve the right to comfortable, energy-efficient, healthy housing that doesn't contribute to the climate and health crises.

Europe now stands at a crossroads, facing a choice between further reliance on fossil fuels and other polluting forms of energy, and scaling up solutions that reduce energy consumption and are based on renewable energy supply. The answer is clear: renewable heating and cooling is cheaper to run, has lower emissions, tackles poor air quality and can meet the scale of action.

But this right is still far from being realised: the upfront cost of retrofitting homes and installing renewable heating solutions means they are not accessible to everyone, particularly low-income households. The European Union and national governments must rapidly scale up programmes that ensure all households can take advantage of the benefits of energy savings and renewable heating technologies.

Achieving this transition will also require a transformation of the role of fossil fuels in the energy market, decommissioning large parts of the current gas grid, stopping new residential connections, facilitating access to domestic renewables and district heating, and ending the sale of gas boilers. Consumers must be protected from volatile gas costs, the costs of maintaining an ever-shrinking gas grid and protected from misleading claims and misinformation on the alleged sustainability of fossil fuels and on the future decarbonisation of the gas grid. They should have the right to participate actively in the transition of their cities, towns and communities away from fossil fuels towards renewable energy.

We need to heat our homes, not the planet: shifting away from fossil fuels to fully decarbonise our homes is one of this decade's climate priorities.

We, the undersigned civil society organisations, call on the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Member States to make this possible through the following measures:

Embrace Energy savings & Sufficiency:

The cleanest, cheapest form of energy is the one we don't use and we need to put everyone in the position to have their homes renovated.

Reject false solutions:

Replace fossil-fuelled heating with renewables; the technology is there and the decarbonisation of heating and cooling can now rely fully on renewable, sustainable, non-emitting mature technologies.

Protect vulnerable consumers:

Divert fossil fuel subsidies to renewable energy solutions; despite their maturity, competitiveness and abundant potential, the barriers preventing millions of households from benefiting from renewable heating and cooling technologies remain too high.

Our vision:

- Everyone in Europe lives in comfortable, safe, healthy conditions while protecting the planet.
- Homeowners and tenants get adequate support for access to sustainable renewable energy heating solutions, and decent, energy-efficient and affordable housing.
- A democratic energy system supports people and the planet: one that is based on zero-emissions buildings with a very high- energy efficiency performance within a 100% renewable energy system.