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SENSITIVE*
UNTIL ADOPTION

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

AccelerateEU - Energy Union

Affordable and Secure Energy through Accelerated Action

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1 INTRODUCTION

The dangers of geopolitical volatility combined with Europe's dependency on fossil fuel imports have now been demonstrated for the second time in less than five years. This vulnerability comes with a price. In 2025, the EU imported EUR 336.7 billion worth of energy products. Since the beginning of the conflict, we have spent an additional [EUR 22] billion on energy imports[1]. While the situation in the Middle East remains volatile and its duration unclear, one thing is certain: its impacts will continue being felt for several months at least and beyond the energy system.

While price hikes are the immediate consequence of the conflict, there is no immediate security of supply threat, although the situation is tense for some fuels. However, even though we are reducing the share of fossil fuels in electricity production, gas and oil continue dominating heating, industry, and transport. This leaves European households and businesses, notably SMEs and energy-intensive industries, exposed to global price spikes. This situation calls for immediate and targeted measures to protect consumers, in particular the most vulnerable ones, from this extra financial burden.

Over the last years, the EU has massively accelerated its efforts to roll out clean generation that can provide clean, abundant, homegrown, affordable and secure energy to our citizens and our businesses. Some Member States are already reaping the fruits of successfully moving ahead with the energy transition, showing that this goal is achievable, sometimes only a few years. Member States that have a high share of renewables and nuclear generally have electricity prices below the EU average. Still, this crisis again shows the remaining structural shortcomings of our energy system.

This moment is also a strong reminder that the choices we make today will determine whether we face the next crisis with fragility or strength. The transition to a clean, abundant, homegrown, secure and affordable energy system has never been just an environmental necessity – it is an economic, competitiveness and security imperative.

Short-term relief measures must not deviate from –but on the contrary, reinforce– the longer-term pathway towards a decarbonised, resilient EU energy system through electrification, clean energy generation, decarbonised heating and cooling and an efficient use of our energy.

To mitigate the impact of the tensions on global markets, the EU can also take advantage of its significant weight as a buyer and of the potential of its single market, a source of strength and solidarity especially in times of crisis.

Reaching these goals will require strong commitment, intensified coordination and increased investments, but the benefits of this transition clearly outweigh its costs. Europe cannot afford to remain exposed to increasingly frequent energy shocks. It is a precondition to take full control

[1] First 44 days.

over our own future. Every delayed investment in the energy transition risks greater cost for society at a later stage.

As a step in a dynamic response –one that will evolve as the situation develops– the Commission is putting forward this plan. It consists of five key areas of action aiming at both supporting Member States in providing and channelling short-term relief to consumers, especially those most immediately affected, as well as facilitating the path already drawn towards a more resilient energy system in the medium and long terms:

- **Increasing coordination** between Member States, both within the single market and with fossil fuel providers;
- Supporting Member States in **protecting consumers, including industry, from price peaks**;
- **Decreasing and replacing oil and gas consumption**;
- **Stepping up our energy system** by promoting electrification and clean, homegrown gases;
- **Boosting investments** by mobilising both public and private funding for the transition.

2 IMMEDIATE ACTION FOR RAPID BENEFITS

2.1 Leverage the benefits of increased EU coordination

The benefits of enhanced coordination at EU level are clear: joint actions under the REPowerEU Plan played a central part in enabling the EU to reduce its gas demand by 18% (August 2022 to March 2023), easing immediate pressures and supporting longer-term stability.

The first focus areas for intensified EU-level coordination includes gas storage filling and use of the respective flexibilities, oil stock releases, adoption of national emergency measures and availability of jet fuel and diesel, including the availability of oil refinery production capacities. For the latter, and especially for jet fuels, the availability and operational capacity of Europe's refining sector must be maximised since 40% of our jet fuel consumption is imported, with supplies passing through the Strait of Hormuz representing about half of it. [*With MOVE, to be added: EU vulnerability on jet fuel*]. While refining capacities are geographically concentrated in the EU[2] and alternative supplies are limited, coordinated monitoring and potential collective action are necessary to maximise refinery output.

Immediate action from the Commission to intensify and facilitate EU-level coordination:

- [**April 2026** onwards] *The **Commission will facilitate the coordination of national actions on gas storage filling** (e.g. by closely monitoring and coordinating with Member States the timing of purchases by market players to avoid price spikes due to increased simultaneous purchasing) **and of possible oil stocks releases** (for which the Commission will provide scenario analysis and coordinate*

[2] Four main regional hubs: North-West Europe, Nordics-Baltics, Mediterranean, and Central and Eastern Europe.

the timing and volumes per region and for the EU) in the Gas Coordination Group and in the Oil Coordination Group, respectively. The Commission will report to the Energy Union Task Force.

- [**April 2026** onwards] *Member States are encouraged to make use of flexibility in gas storage filling (up to 10%) and, if persistent unfavourable market conditions continue, the **Commission will assess** and, where necessary and without compromising the EU's or Member States' security of supply, **stands ready to further increase the permitted deviation threshold** (up to additional 5%) under the updated EU Gas Storage Regulation.*
- [**April 2026** onwards] *The **Commission will promote** coordinated EU outreach to **oil and gas suppliers and partner countries** with similar energy import profiles, including by **maximising the potential of the EU Energy and Raw Materials Platform**[3] and seek to enhance energy cooperation to increase supply from our neighbourhood.*
- [With MOVE to add action on jet fuels].
- [**May 2026**] *The **Commission will map the European refining capacities, assess needs and work on actions** to ensure that **existing refining capacity is fully utilised** and maintained in the EU with sufficient domestic refining capacity to ensure our resilience across the entire spectrum of oil products.*

2.2 Protecting consumers and industry from price shocks

Consumers and industry are expecting, from Member States and the Union, actions that protect them from unexpected large price hikes. Household budgets are tightening with rising energy costs reducing their disposable income. This is already visible today when fueling cars[4]. Since about two thirds of all the natural gas consumed in the EU is used to generate heat or cold in buildings or in industry, gas price spikes will also result in challenges for many consumers once the increase is visible on the energy bills. Currently, many housholds maystill benefit from the conditions in their gas and electricity contracts they concluded before the conflict in the Middle-East has started, but this might change when their individual supply contracts expire. Consumers in a vulnerable situation are even more exposed to these challenges.

With persisting and recurring pressure on fossil fuel imports and energy prices remaining volatile, immediate support is needed, but it must be targeted, timely and temporary, and tied to long-term solutions (see Annex III). The existing EU legislative framework and Commission initiatives, including the Citizens Energy Package[5], provide a range of measures Member States could consider activating immediate relief for consumers. This can take the form of, for example by targeted income support schemes, energy vouchers, including for the replacement of boilers, social tariffs, lowering fully or partially excise duties on electricity for vulnerable households, VAT reductions for heat pumps, solar photovoltaic, solar boilers or small-scale batteries, incentivising

[3] https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-security/eu-energy-and-raw-materials-platform_en
[4] For example, most Europeans are currently paying about EUR 1.8-2.2 per litre for petrol and EUR 2.0–2.4 for diesel.
[5] (COM/2026/115)

and simplifying participation in energy communities and energy self-production, and by encouraging consumers to compare and switch their energy suppliers or contracts.

For vulnerable consumers, Member States have the means under the existing EU legislative framework to introduce temporary or full bans on disconnection from energy supply. Since the highest share of oil is used in the transport sector, Member States should consider providing incentives for the switch to e-vehicles. For businesses – especially small and medium-sized and energy-intense enterprises– targeted support mechanisms may include financing schemes, vouchers or leasing models to facilitate investments in energy efficiency and clean technologies.

Immediate actions from the Commission to support Member States:

- [**April-May 2026**] *The **Commission will set up a digital repository** to gather and share non-confidential information on Member States' national emergency measures, help coordination between neighbouring Member States and facilitate the **sharing and promotion of good practices**, including through the **Energy Union Task Force**.*
- [**April 2026** onwards] *The Commission stands ready to cooperate with **those Member States, which intend to introduce national emergency measures which must be targeted, timely and temporary, and provide an assessment** of their expected impacts, including beyond national borders.*[**April 2026** onwards] *The Commission will provide **continuous assistance to Member States in the design of targeted, timely and temporary measures, including price interventions and income support schemes** envisaging fossil fuel reduction, support schemes for SMEs and energy-intensive industries. Respecting decisions from Member States willing to use taxation to address social fairness of cost, the Commission will assess Member States' national measures for the taxation of windfall profits. The Commission will **facilitate the exchange of best practices, lessons learnt, guiding principles and the design of templates** in the context of the **Energy Union Task Force**, and through appropriate and customised tailored guidance and steering to each interested Member State.*
- [**April 2026**] *The Commission will adopt a Temporary Framework outlining emergency measures to support the most exposed economic sectors affected by price spikes.*
- [**April 2026**] *The Commission is publishing **practical guidance** for an effective scaling up of **consumer empowerment and protection**, focusing in particular on **the protection of vulnerable customers from disconnections**, fast-tracking and simplifying energy supplier and energy contract switching, **citizens participation in energy communities and self-consumption**, on improving **supplier risk management** and protecting consumers during gas phase-out.*

2.3 Saving energy and replacing oil and natural gas/LNG consumption

Energy savings and replacing oil and gas consumption by homegrown clean energy have proven efficient in addressing high energy prices and reducing Europe's dependence on imported fossil fuels. Without efficiency improvements since 2000, Europe's energy demand and import dependency would be more than [XX%], compared to around [XX]% today. In the short-term, significant benefits across various sectors can be achieved through a combination of electrification, efficiency improvements and accelerated deployment of clean technologies (see Annex II).

In households and buildings, supporting r building adaptions of rapid impact, including improvements in insulation or replacing inefficient appliances, can deliver immediate energy savings and cost relief. Replacing gas and oil boilers with heat pumps would cut final energy consumption/energy bills in those buildings by around XX% on average. Targeted financial incentives and social leasing schemes for clean technologies, for example for e-vehicles, residual or industrial heat pumps, rooftop solar panels or battery storage systems, can help consumers with upfront and maintenance costs can accelerate the deployment in households and industry.

In transport, electric mobility and public transport can [*to be further completed by MOVE*] With the current high oil prices, every kilometre driven in a petrol car can easily cost [XX] as driving an electric car would.

Through immediate action with strong results in the medium-term, oil and gas could be replaced by clean, homegrown and abundant energy, including by solar thermal and geothermal energy, biomethane and hydrogen.

Increasing the share of solar thermal energy, including in district heating and cooling systems, the repowering existing solar thermal projects or the deployment of new ones, could lead to significant energy saving[6]. [*TBC, data not available*]. This is particularly relevant for industry, notably: (i) the food & beverage sector, (ii) chemicals sector (up to 400°) and (iii) the agriculture sector (e.g. for greenhouses). Geothermal energy can replace shares of natural gas in district heating or cooling networks. In addition, geothermal projects can provide storage for thermal energy and contribute to electricity generation[7]. It is therefore important to support the swift deployment of new geothermal projects and explore the potential for repowering existing ones. Furthermore, industrial heat pumps can deliver process heat up to 250-300°C or upgrade low-temperature sources to make them usable, driving waste heat recovery in industry and district heating and cooling.

Finally, since the ramp up of hydrogen remains slow, the EU legislative framework needs to be adapted to ensure that the industry switch to decarbonised fuels at an accelerated pace

Immediate action from the Commission to support Member States:

- [**May 2026**] *The Commission will present of a* ***catalogue of efficient energy savings and system efficiency measures*** *as well as* ***measures to replace fossil fuels by homegrown clean energy*** *that Member States can rapidly deploy to reduce gas and oil consumption in the short-term at the forthcoming informal* ***meeting of the EU Energy Ministers in Cyprus on 13 May 2026*** *and discuss their uptake across the Member States. The catalogue will be based on an assessment of the most efficient measures implemented since 2022 and will include examples of concrete actions that have been already successfully implemented on the ground with large replication potential across the EU, and their impacts.*

[6] Add estimates.

[7] The European Geothermal Energy Council estimates that next-generation geothermal technologies could deliver up to 301 TWh annually in the EU, equivalent to around 42% of current coal and gas generation.

- [**May 2026** onwards] *The Commission will promote and help developing **social leasing schemes for clean and efficient technologies**, e.g. for e-vehicles, residual or commercial heat pumps, small-scale batteries, including through the Energy Transition Investment Council and the Energy Efficiency Financing Coalition.*
- [**May 2026** onwards] *On geothermal, the Commission will support Member States and relevant stakeholders with detailed geological data and establish an **EU level database**. The Commission will explore the establishment of **geothermal derisking schemes and insurance schemes** with the European Investment Bank and National Promotional Banks to derisk short- and long-term resource risks. Through Global Gateway, the Commission will promote **international collaboration on geothermal energy projects** with key partner countries.*
- [**May 2026** onwards] *On solar thermal, together with the Energy Efficiency Financing Coalition, the Commission will help developing public support schemes for the **uptake of large-scale solar thermal projects**.*
- [**June 2026**] *After assessing and in view of the slower than expected ramp-up of the hydrogen market, the Commission will propose a **targeted review of the production criteria for renewable hydrogen**,which will also contribute to accelerating the development of electro-Sustainable Aviation Fuel (**eSAF**).*

3 IMMEDIATE ACTION FOR LASTING BENEFITS

3.1 Stepping up our energy system

The EU has taken decisive action to future-proof its energy system through continuous actions to deploy clean, homegrown energy sources. The need to step-up and fundamentally transform our energy system is no longer a matter of ambition, but a necessity for resilience, energy security, competitiveness and social cohesion. To fully reap the benefits, a swift and complete implementation of the existing EU energy legislation across all Member States, as well as an acceleration of the negotiations of the EU Grids Package are necessary and indispensable steps.

Grids are needed to let power flow at the lowest price from where it is produced to where it is consumed. The efficient and flexible use of grids and higher grid productivity will bring costs significantly down and help doubling down on electrification in various sectors, including the heating and cooling sector. Interconnectivity, access to grids and grid productivity are also prerequisites for many service providers, which help consumers to lower their energy bills or to react to price signals through demand response. This goes hand in hand with price structures that encourage the deployment of flexibility services and storage to better integrate and benefit from renewable energy. The following graph illustrates well that a higher share of clean and homegrown electricity not only protects from exposure to global fossil fuel price shocks, but also results in lower, affordable electricity prices.

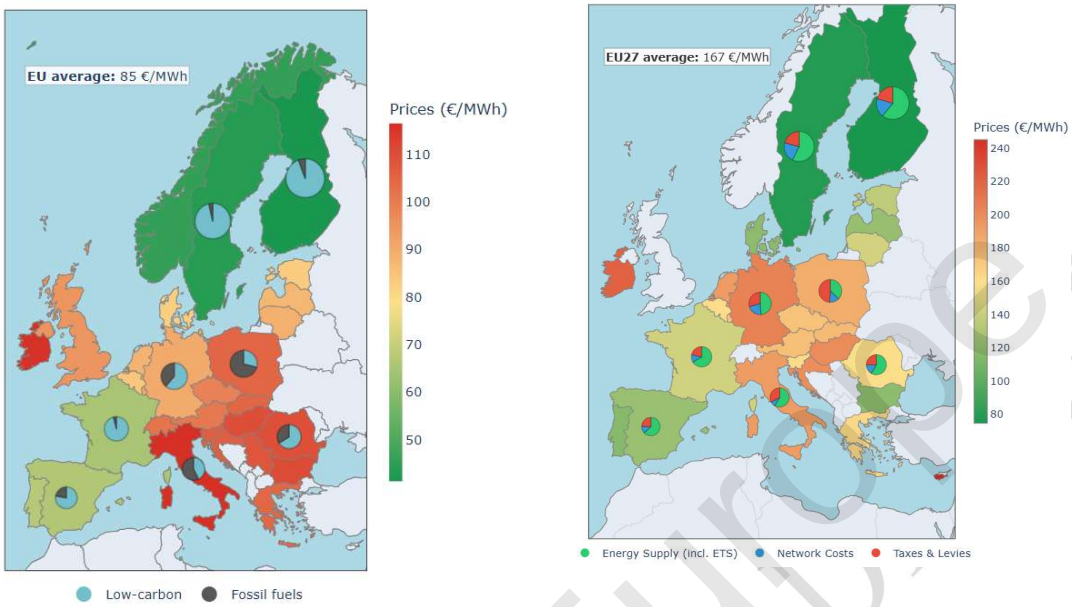

Figure 2. Correlation between clean power mixes and electricity affordability (wholesale – left; industrial retail – right) [Source: DG ENER]

To build a resilient energy system fed by homegrown energy, the availability of electricity and thermal storage capacities as well as flexibility, including batteries, are key. While the current storage capacity amounts to 55 GW, the Union must ensure that this capacity is massively expanded to XX GW by 2030 and politically support projects already in the planning phase.

Another key lever is maximising existing renewable energy infrastructure. Rapid repowering of big wind farms and renewable plants, including offshore wind parks, can quickly deliver additional much needed relief.

The current crisis also offers an opportunity to accelerate electrification and thereby boost EU demand, and through that manufacturing of, clean technologies (e.g. of residential and industrial heat pumps). More than two-thirds of heat pumps installed in Europe are produced in Europe. With clarity on the development of demand, manufacturers will find it easier to ramp up capacity and investment into skills development, drawing on the experience of 2022. A doubling of the installed commercial and residual heat pumps capacity would reduce the use of imported fossil fuels by [XX] GW.

According to some projections,[8] by electrifying half of its economy, Europe could cut by 2040 its fossil fuel dependence by XX. Achieving an electrification rate of 32%, as suggested in the Clean

[8] Boosting-Electrification-in-Europe.pdf

Industrial Deal, would mean that Europe could consume XX TWh yearly more than today. To support the swift transformation to electrification, a new holistic plan is needed.

Further indicators and enablers to fast-track the Union´s energy independence are listed in Annex I.

Immediate Action:

- [**By July 2026**] *The Commission **calls on and will support co-legislators to conclude negotiations on Grids package before the summer**. This is indispensable for accelerating the rollout of needed renewable energy projects, storage, including large-scale batteries, and grid infrastructures and reducing energy prices and import dependencies.*
- [**Q2 2026**]*: The Commission will publish an **Electrification Action Plan*** to, inter alia, introduce an ambitious electrification target and address barriers in the industrial, transport and building sectors, as well as horizontal barriers to the electrification of the economy […].
- [**April 2026** onwards] *The Commission will continue working with Member States to fast track the implementation of the Energy Highways. Following the progress already made on the Bornholm Energy Island, the Commission will multiply political-level contacts, dedicate resources and mobilise all available tools to strengthen the investment frameworks and overcome the barriers that prevent a fast rollout of the projects.*
- [**May 2026** onwards]*: The Commission, together with Member States and stakeholders including through the Energy Union Task Force and High-Level Regional Groups, will identify electricity generators, including wind parks, which are close to end-of-life cycle and projects which could be repowered to contribute to a faster roll out of electricity supply in the coming months.*
- [**May 2026**] *The Commission will adopt **legal proposals for action on network charges and taxation**. These will aim at facilitating the transition towards a more electrified, more efficient and more resilient energy system that can lead to lower prices for all consumers (see Annex IV).*
- [CLIMA TBD] Actions on ETS/carbon cost.
- [**2026-2027**] *The Commission will ensure **strict monitoring of** the implementation of existing relevant **EU legislation** using all available tools, including **infringements**, for example on permitting, storage, flexibility and maximisation of cross-zonal capacity, to speed up the rolling out of clean energy. To accelerate progress, it will **fast-track assessment of key provisions**, provide **pragmatic guidance for implementation**, including via Commission **recommendations,** and support Member States to ensure harmonisation and consistency across the EU.*

3.2 Boosting investment

The EU's response to the current energy crisis relies also on **mobilising public funds – at EU and national level – to catalyse private capital at scale**. Anticipating and accelerating the investments in energy transition today will break the cycle of fossil fuels dependency once and for all. Significant resources are available at EU level, including through the Recovery and Resilience Facility ("RRF", EUR 184 billion), Cohesion Policy funds (EUR 38 billion); yet, in this crisis, speed and impact of implementation are paramount. Furthermore, public money alone cannot cover the significant investment needs (EUR 660 billion annually until 2030) for the energy transition. Institutional investors (e.g. insurance companies and pension funds) manage over EUR 12 trillion in Europe, yet these vast savings remain largely untapped for critical energy transition projects.

The **State aid framework** will also enable Member States to support strategic investments in energy infrastructure and clean technologies while preserving a level playing field within the internal market. [COMP to complement on CISAF: number of approved measures supporting clean tech and budget]

Immediate Action:

- [**Q2 – Q3 2026**] *The Commission will organise a flagship high-level **Clean Energy Investment Summit** bringing together the financial services industry, including major institutional investors, industrial leaders, project developers and public financiers to accelerate private financing. The Summit will **target immediate, high-impact sectors** (e.g. storage/batteries, EV infrastructure, electrification of industry, large-scale solar thermal, district heating, optimisation of existing grids) to address the current crisis and ensure Europe's long-term energy transition objectives.*
- [**April 2026 onwards**] *The Commission **will assist Member States**, including by holding dedicated meetings of Member States' Expert Groups and providing support via the Technical Support Instrument, **to make maximum use and reallocate where Member States wish existing EU funding**, including from the RRF and cohesion policy funds, towards **energy-related investments** that can deliver quick impact and alleviate the impact of rising energy prices by, e.g.:*

A) Scaling-up existing measures for the reduction of energy consumption, the deployment of clean energy (e.g. solar PV, batteries, heat pumps) and stronger and safer critical energy infrastructure.

B) Introducing add-ons to existing measures / expanding their scope, e.g. measures to address energy poverty, as add-on to existing energy efficiency measures; expand the scope of PV solar from rooftop to also agrivoltaics; expand the scope of accelerated and simplified permitting.

C) Transferring unused RRF funds to InvestEU or making capital injections to national promotional banks and institutions, thereby allowing the use of such funds beyond August 2026, as indicated in the Commission Communication "NextGenerationEU – the Road to 2026".

- [***April 2026** onwards]: **The Commission will assess whether further action is necessary to simplify rules to accelerate the deployment of EU funds** for investments in the energy transition.*
- **[***Placeholder CLIMA: Industrial Decarbonisation Bank – including about auction as a service*]
- [April 2026 onwards]: ***The Commission will assist Member States who wish to explore allocating revenues from the EU ETS** for targeted measures that **accelerate electrification investments** (e.g. in the fields of transport, electrification of heating) and **for investments that help reduce electricity prices**, provided these investments contribute to households' electrification and industrial decarbonisation.*[9]
- [**April 2026** onwards]: ***The Commission will work with the European Energy Financing Coalition to develop standardised financial products for clean heating and renovation** and develop and promote new energy service business models helping directly SMEs to deploy energy efficiency and electrification solutions.*
- [COMP TBD during ISC].

[9] The support to industrial investments can be designed in accordance with Section 4.5 of the Clean Industrial Deal State Aid Framework (CISAF), but only if 100% of the ETS revenues is used for investments in decarbonisation, as required by Article 10(3) of Directive 2003/87/EC establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community.

ANNEX I

Indicators and enablers for the Union´s energy independence (TBD)

1. Reducing reliance on gas and oil use in non-hard to abate sectors

•Expand district heating to cover [XX%] of total heat demand by 2030, while ensuring at least [XX%] of district heat is supplied from renewable energy and recovered waste heat.

•[XXX]on use/switch to biomethane, biogas, biomass (while strict compliance with RED requirements).

2. Boost electrification

•Increase the annual rates of heat pump deployment (residential and industrial), e.g., residential sector from 2.4 million units (2025 data) to [X] million units per year, commercial sector from [xx] units to [xx] units per year up to 2030 (including combination with district heating and cooling).

•Flexibility devices for industry: how much could be installed faster in some flexible industry and how much gas could be saved already?

• Electricity-gas price ratio and electricity-oil price ratio to drop to [XXX] in all MS by [XXX]

3. Energy Efficiency

•To progress on energy efficiency targets 2030, endeavour to achieve [XX] GW of savings in households and industries through energy efficiency solutions and smart financing of upfront costs (together with financial institutions, manufacturers etc).

•Endeavor to meet [XX%] of EU heat needs with at least [XX%] waste heat recovery from industry by [XXXX]

ANNEX II

Examples of good national practices

Boosting uptake of clean technologies	
France	Large-scale subsidies for heat pumps, geothermal and solar energy, combined with a €500 million "Heat Fund" for industry to convert from fossil fuels into biomass, wind and solar. Ban of gas boiler in new buildings by 2027. Social leasing schemes for EVs.
Belgium	VAT reduction to 6% for heat pumps, solar PV and solar boilers.
Austria	Up to 100% subsidy for fossil boiler replacement for vulnerable households.
The Netherlands	Obligation for companies to implement all energy efficiency measures with a payback period under five years.
Germany	Lower electricity prices for heat pumps in exchange of flexibility
Building-sector measures	
Belgium (Flanders)	Up to 50% subsidies and zero-interest loans (up to €50,000) for renovation, including insulation.
Lithuania	Integrated plan combining behavioural measures, quick-payback investments and long-term renovation, targeting 20% energy savings over two years.
Italy	Awareness raising campaign on the reduction of heating temperatures by 1°C and increasing 1°C for cooling in public buildings.
Germany	Energy saving ordinances targeting the public sector, businesses and private households with rules on heating, lighting and energy use, leading to approximately 20 TWh gas savings per year.
Incentives for public transport and modal shift	
Spain	Reduction of public transport ticket prices by at least 30%, up to 100% in some regions.
Belgium	Rail ticket price freeze through public compensation.
Germany	Nationwide campaign promoting energy savings, including mobility-related behavioural changes.
Cross-cutting measures	
Denmark	Development of digital tools to promote flexible electricity consumption and demand shifting.
Finland	Nationwide behavioural campaign "Down a Degree to ensure energy for all households", leading to 86% of citizens implementing energy-saving actions.

ANNEX III

Types of measures for immediate relief

What can Member States do for immediate impact?	How/which tools to use?
Households and buildings	
1. Protect vulnerable households	• Issue targeted energy vouchers for vulnerable households. • Introduce or extend temporary regulated prices for vulnerable and energy poor households (social tariffs). • Introduce full or partial targeted reductions of excise duties on electricity for energy poor and vulnerable households.
2. Heating and air conditioning use	• Adjust default settings on condensing boilers and centralised air conditioning systems in public buildings to increase efficiency and reduce energy use for space heating and cooling and water heating. • Require occupants of commercial buildings to adjust default settings on condensing boilers and centralised air conditioning systems to increase efficiency. • Encourage occupants of private residential buildings to keep condensing boiler temperatures below 50 degrees.
3. Support fast roll-out clean and energy efficient technologies at home, including notably efficiency and space water heating	• Introduce fiscal incentives and/or financial support, including social leasing for vulnerable households, to rapid roll-out of easy-to-install clean and efficient technologies, such as plug-in batteries, PV panels, heat pumps, high-performance windows. • Make use of vitality social tariffs (VST) and bonus grants to quickly replace fossil fuel-based boilers. • Remove legal barriers for the safe deployment of "behind the meter" plug-in technologies mitigating the system costs and incentivise interoperability and flexibility. • Introduce fiscal incentives and/or subsidies for replacing gas-based cooking appliances with electric ones, as well as old and inefficient appliances.
4. Prevent consumer disconnection	• Put in place a temporary ban on energy disconnections. • Ensure financial stability of suppliers through sound supplier risk management and effective supplier of last resort regimes. • Ensure that energy suppliers provide customers with "best tariff" advice based on usage and establish "early warnings" when consumption spikes or when risks of non-payment arise.
5. Enable switching and demand flexibility	• Ensure consumers can easily switch to cheaper contracts and have access to neutral and transparent comparison tools to choose the best tariffs and contracts. • Remove barriers for those companies which reward customers for shifting their electricity usage from peak times to when it is cheaper.
6. Promotion of self-consumption and energy communities	• Implement the Commission Recommendations on self-consumption and energy communities at national level. • Support and further enable self-consumption and energy communities through fiscal incentives and/or subsidies, including by making use of EU guarantees and funds to support energy communities.

7. Awareness raising	• Provide free-of-charge advice, and energy performance certificates accompanied by recommendations on energy saving measures. • Support the dissemination of information encouraging citizens and SMEs to save energy.
Industry, businesses and SMEs	
8. Innovative financing practices and ESCOs	• Support the development and fast rollout of innovative financing schemes and financial products that support rapid uptake of renewable energy, storage and energy efficiency measures as well as ESCO businesses.
9. Energy audits and reduction of heat losses	• Incentivise energy audits and the implementation of the most impactful and cost-effective recommendations to tackle heat losses from high temperature processes. • Oblige companies to implement those measures identified by the energy audits with a certain payback period (e.g. 3 years). • Provide spot checks and maintenance in thermal heating systems to reduce wastage.
10. Replace inefficient electric motors and promote switch to on-site renewables	• Introduce fiscal incentives and/or subsidies to accelerate the replacement of inefficient electric motors systems in industry. • Introduce fiscal incentives and/or subsidies to accelerate the replacement of fossil fuel-based systems with more cost-effective renewables-based ones.
Transport	
11. Increase teleworking days	• Where possible, encourage businesses to ensure at least one day of compulsory teleworking per week. • Close public buildings when possible.
12. Promotion of public transport and rail	• Reduce the price of public transport (e.g. seasonal tickets) and/or make it free for certain categories of people (e.g. most vulnerable). • Introduce subsidies for lowering the price of train tickets. • Incentivise workers to commute by public transport.
13. Promotion of alternatives to car transport in urban and peri-urban areas	• Introduce public support for free bike sharing and other micro-mobility solutions. • Introduce subsidies/fiscal incentives for bikes' purchases. • Develop further bike lanes in urban and peri-urban areas. • Increase possibility to travel on public transport with a bike. • Incentivise last-mile delivery by cargo bike or smaller delivery e-vehicles.
14. Introduce limits for cars in urban areas	• Develop and/or extend of car-free zones to facilitate soft mobility. • Organise car-free days or alternate days for private car access in cities.
15. Promote car-sharing	• Introduce dedicated traffic lanes and dedicated parking spots, as well as reduced road tolls for higher occupancy vehicles.
16. Support uptake of electric and more efficient cars, vans, trucks and buses	• Introduce, continue or extend public support for the purchase of electric and more efficient vehicles. • Exempt electric heavy-duty vehicles from tolls and implement Eurovignette for these vehicles. • Faster rollout of publicly accessible recharging infrastructure. • Support the deployment of private recharging infrastructure through fiscal incentives or subsidies. • Increase the uptake of electric vehicles in public transport.
17. Promotion of more efficient driving	• Raise awareness and offer trainings on eco-driving.

practices and operation of freight vehicles and delivery of goods	• Ensure optimised loading of heavy-duty vehicles through better planning and data sharing. • Optimising multi-modal delivery solutions, including through last-mile zero-emission solutions and pick up stations. • Accelerating rollout of intelligent transport system (ITS) services.
18. Support alternatives to air travel	• Mandate businesses to avoid air travel for work whenever possible. • Minimise air travel for public sector's employees.
19. Slow steaming	• Recommend cargo ships to operate at significantly reduced speed via international regulations/regional policies/ contractual standards.
Natural gas	
20. Optimise existing power plants to ensure sufficient generation capacity, lowering gas needs for gas-fired power plants	• Optimisation of the availability of nuclear and hydro power plants, including when possible and advisable delaying maintenances and setting back-up plans in case of prolonged dryness. • Avoid premature retirement of generation assets, such as existing nuclear facilities, that can continue to deliver reliable, low-cost and low-emissions electricity.
Cross-cutting energy system	
21. Provide price relief and support that promotes long-term clean transition goals	• Design system-friendly network tariffs to lower system costs and fully exploit the potential of renewable sources. • Introduce progressive retail prices and ensure that intervention in retail price settings foster savings and the switch from gas to electricity, and reward demand-response flexibility. • Remove preferential treatments for fossil fuels. • Introduce, where relevant, national price support measures for vulnerable households and businesses that are targeted, time-limited and do not increase demand. • Targeted dissemination of information to households and small businesses, such as lowering heating and boiler temperatures, avoiding peak-hour use, turning off lights, closing doors, heating fewer rooms, blocking draughts, and reducing energy use in shops.

ANNEX IV

Statement of intent on upcoming legislative proposals on network charges and taxation

In 2024, at EU level, network charges accounted for 27% of the electricity bill of households and 21% of that of businesses. Electricity taxes and levies accounted for 24% of the price for households and non-recoverable taxes and levies accounted for 16% of the price for businesses. Introducing harmonized rules on Union level that allow to bring down these cost drivers durably will therefore have a significant impact on affordability for European consumers and competitiveness of the European economy. Accordingly, as requested in the Council conclusions of 19 March, the Commission is currently working on a targeted **legal proposal amending the electricity market rules** with the objective of structurally reducing system costs.

This proposal will in particular make it mandatory for national regulatory authorities to provide better incentives for grid operators to increase cost effectiveness, e.g. by relying on grid-enhancing, smart and innovative technologies. Grid users would be given stronger incentives to adapt their consumption behaviour to system needs. Finally, the proposed changes would improve transparency of grid tariffs and introduce EU-level indicators to measure and benchmark the cost-efficiency of different grid operators. The proposal would also include an empowerment for binding guidelines on network charges design. These guidelines will also set out the conditions under which regulatory authorities can introduce specific tariff rules for certain user categories, such as energy intensive users.

To make the grid "smarter" the proposal will further introduce a minimum deployment requirement for smart meters among final customers to ensure access to granular consumption data and enable active participation, thereby creating a critical mass of such systems across the EU to support more efficient use of the electricity network and help consumers better manage and reduce their energy costs. Building on the EU Grids package, the proposal would also require to better consider and incentivise grid-enhancing technologies, smart solutions and non-fossil flexibility by system operators on all levels and would put forward a legal framework for development of smart grid indicators, to measure progress. It will also support cross-border data management and exchange by grid operators for the effective use of smart grids. The proposal will moreover enable system operators to cooperate on the secure use of data to develop and deploy innovative solutions for grid operation and optimisation.

The proposal will also address the heavier tax burden applied by many Member States on electricity as compared to fossil fuels by amending the Directive on taxation of energy products and electricity to ensure electricity is taxed below fossil fuels (ETD Art 4).

It will aim in particular at giving more flexibility to Member States to reduce the level of taxation imposed on electricity used by energy intensive industries by removing conditionalities for the application of zero rate on these businesses under the same directive (ETD Art 17.4). The proposal will also aim at bringing taxation down to zero for vulnerable households as well as removing non-energy-related levies from the electricity bill [TAXUD].