



ENERGYCITIES

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Open letter from Mayors to Petr Fiala, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Cc : President of the European Commission Ms. Ursula Von der Leyen

Cc : European Commissioner for Energy Ms. Kadri Simson

Re: The European energy policy we urgently need

8 September 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

We, Mayors and local elected representatives would like to support you in ensuring that no EU citizen or SME is unable to cover basic energy needs. We therefore welcome your initiative to host an emergency Energy Ministers meeting to discuss immediate solutions and long-term reforms to the current energy crisis.

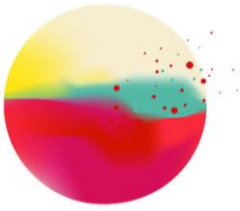
As energy now makes everyday headlines, citizens are overwhelmed with contradictory data and news items which do not offer the serene environment needed to have informed debates. There is no shortage of expert nor theory on how the energy market should be reformed. What is certain is that not all proposals are equal in terms of the added benefit they can bring to society at large.

We, Mayors, consider it our duty to ensure the prosperity of our citizens and constituencies. But to protect is to empower. The European Union has already made major strides down this road by creating a strong legal framework for prosumership and energy communities. Current events are showing us how important it is to go further. **We need to give the European people the power to decide and act on their energy future.**

Emergency measures to tackle unbearable prices are undoubtedly needed. But immediate responses shall also be followed by structural transformations.

We therefore urge the EU Council to put energy sufficiency and locally-owned energy production at the core of its strategy in order to guarantee the long-term energy security of European citizens while reinforcing the EU's core principle of social cohesion.

Our first proposal is to mainstream energy sufficiency in all EU policies as it is the unique way to truly decrease the structural vulnerabilities of our economy. We need to go beyond the fringe measures that merely encourage the companies and households that have alternatives to go for "smart consumption". This goes against the principle of social cohesion and is also incompatible with the objective of a just transition, as only the more privileged citizens will be able to adapt.



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In the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, energy sufficiency has been defined for the first time as an opportunity to avoid **"the demand for materials, energy, land, water, and other natural resources while delivering a decent living standard for all within the planetary boundaries."** This very sentence resonates like a powerful and purposeful mission for the European project to undertake. It will require a profound remaking and questioning of existing policy instruments, cutting across a large span of policy areas. But daring to force such a recast of EU policy-making will also bring trust and confidence. And trust is the absolute foundation of any future EU project.

Therefore, the proposed energy savings regulation including mandatory targets should be complemented by an **energy sufficiency directive** which shall constitute the backbone of the EU economic transformation and the 4th pillar of the EU climate and energy policy.

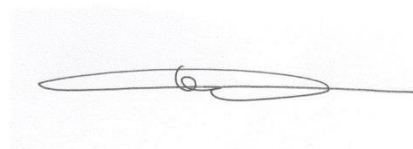
Our second proposal is to create an EU "Energy Reclaim Fund" to enable cities and communities to harness local energy resources and benefit from redistributive energy policies. This Fund would not only support emergency measures but also initiate reforms to make social fairness and cohesion a primary objective of EU energy policies. Alongside IPCC experts, the Club of Rome's latest "Earth4all"ⁱ publication reiterates the absolute urge to put social cohesion at the core of all our policies. Only inclusive and equal societies will be capable to withstand the multiples tipping points we are facingⁱⁱ.

This Energy Reclaim Fund should support the deployment of human resources and technical assistance to implement the energy transformation at local level and invest in local and shared renewable productions.

Lastly, our third proposal is to agree on a radical new EU energy governanceⁱⁱⁱ, looking beyond the medium-term of the next winters to come. In a world of absolute volatility and unpredictability of energy supply and prices, but also of finite resources, the whole set of policy instruments we have must be reinvented to foster the potential of endogenous energy production and sharing. As all levels must be mobilised, it calls for a radical new EU (energy) governance including local leaders as equal partners.

We look forward to further exchange on these proposals and thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Roumet, Executive Director



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On behalf of the **Board of Directors of Energy Cities**, composed of the following members:

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Stephan Brandligt, Deputy Mayor of Delft, Netherlands

Tristant Riom, Deputy Mayor of Nantes, France

Willy Demeyer, Mayor of Liège, Belgium

ⁱ <https://www.clubofrome.org/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/just-resilience-leaving-no-one-behind>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/74737/OM-AX-22-042-EN-N.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>