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Greens/EFA call for massive expansion of renewable energies and compensation for worse-affected households

Today, MEPs have been discussing the situation around rising energy prices. The Greens/EFA Group are calling for a massive expansion of renewable energies and measures for more energy efficiency as well as targeted national measures such as an energy allowance for vulnerable households. The European Commission should also tackle price speculation.

Ville Niinistö MEP, Greens/EFA member of the Industry, Research and Energy committee, comments;

"The steep rise in fossil gas prices is the main cause for the increasing electricity prices in Europe. According to experts, this amounts to at least 80% of the price increase. We cannot keep living in a world where demand for fossil fuels such as gas continuously increases. The European supply of fossil gas is mostly imported. The price hike highlights the urgency to get rid of dependency on gas in Europe and hasten the transition to an energy efficient and fully renewable energy system. This is in the best interest of our citizens."

"We also need short term solutions that support the most vulnerable. The member states should use ETS and VAT revenues to alleviate the price hike nationally and speed up the support to change the heating systems and insulate houses to lower energy consumption. Social tariffs and energy loans can be used to help households in need with costs and in changing their energy solutions. However, we should not start meddling with the EU electricity markets with price ceilings for fossil fuels as it would only be a new fossil fuel subsidy in disguise and continue our dependency on gas."

Bas Eickhout MEP, Vice Chair of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee, comments;

"Electricity and energy should not be luxury goods, many people are worried about the increase of energy prices. The EU is stuck in the gas trap with gas prices going through the roof. Right now, we need compensation for the vulnerable households. But, above all, we also need to make ourselves less dependent on gas and Russia. With swift measures for more energy efficiency, and a massive expansion of renewable energies. Today's high prices also show that the Commission must take action against price speculation and bring EU competition law in line with the Green Deal."

"The key to affordable energy lies in greater efficiency and a robust and cost-effective renewable energy policy, as they do not rely on imports. We call on the EU Commission to promote energy-efficient household appliances in its planned Eco-Design proposal and to spur the renovation wave with cost neutral renovation schemes such as zero interest loans or tax breaks."

More:

The EU, together with member states, needs to probe into any possible market manipulation by big gas companies like the Russian energy supplier Gazprom.

The Commission will present a tool box next week including targeted measures to help Member States fight energy poverty. Member states should offer reduced costs for vulnerable groups, as allowed under the Electricity Directive. Member states need to also inform citizens about existing tools such mediation services (ombudsperson), social tariffs, suppliers of last resort aimed at protecting the most vulnerable citizens.

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