



CAN Europe Save winter for a safer future

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Photo by Kat McBeath

THIS IS A FOSSIL WINTER CRISIS

One that is fuelled by human made disasters such as war and climate change, both wrecking the futures of tens of millions of people in Europe and beyond. This fossil winter crisis has exposed **Europe's dependence on Russian fossil gas and fossil fuels in general**. Through our energy bills, we are paying the price for years of climate inaction, ineffective climate policies, government's systematic favoring the profit of fossil fuel companies over the wellbeing of the people, and the delay of the energy transition away from fossil fuels and towards sustainable renewables, energy savings and energy efficiency. **This fossil winter is yet another manifestation - cause and effect - of the climate crisis.**

Only a just energy transition will put the power back into the hands of the people. We must ramp up action towards gaining energy independence from Russian gas and fossil fuels in general, while striving to phase out fossil fuels for good to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C and keep us safe. Through maximising our energy savings, improving energy efficiency policies, and accelerating the massive rollout of sustainable renewable energy across Europe, **we can empower communities and make fossil winters a thing of the past.**

At a time when democracy is under threat, there is an urgent need for a democratic, sustainable renewable energy system that can replace the fossil-fuel based concentration of power and wealth with more distributed, locally based energy systems that promote an equal and just society.

Fossil winters should be a thing of the past. Policy-makers and governments across Europe must act now. Saving this winter can pave the way to a safer future.

HOW TO GET OUT OF THIS FOSSIL MESS?

1 SOLUTIONS

The EU can become independent from Russian gas by 2025 if strong political and financial support is channeled to energy savings, energy efficiency and renewables deployment.

A strong and flexible energy system reliant on energy savings and renewables can finally put Europe and its people on the path to an energy secure and safer future, aligned with the Paris Agreement.



RENOVATION OF HOMES

- Renovating our homes and buildings can significantly reduce Europe's energy consumption and **help us wean off Russian fossil gas**, and fossil fuels in general.

ENERGY COMMUNITIES

- Our energy demand can be met through the installations of solar energy and renewable heating technologies in our buildings. **The growth of citizen-led community energy projects can further reduce our dependence on unreliable fossil fuels, providing people with autonomy over their own energy generation and consumption.**

Through maximising our energy savings, improving energy efficiency policies, and accelerating the massive rollout of sustainable renewable energy across Europe, we can empower communities by putting the power back into their hands.

2 SOLIDARITY

No one should be left alone and behind. No one should fear coping with the unprecedented hardship of this fossil winter. Countries in Europe have a responsibility to act.

- They should come together in solidarity and with an equity approach to identify and support the (new) most vulnerable, avoiding a one-size-fits-all solution.
- Governments should acknowledge that by tackling this winter crisis they are not only helping people living in Europe today, but they are contributing to a safer future for people everywhere.



3 BLAME

This fossil winter crisis has exposed the EU's dependence on Russian fossil gas and all fossil fuels as such. Skyrocketing gas prices, their impact on electricity prices and reduced projections for gas consumption in the EU have **completely changed the context for the future role of fossil fuels** in the EU.

Governments must understand that this is what happens when you systematically favour the profit of fossil fuel companies over the wellbeing and livelihood of the people and the planet.



Photo by Alisdare Hickson

The EU should not diversify from one fossil fuel dependency to another and risk locking us in more fossil winters in the future.

THE TIME IS NOW for the European Union, EU Member States, and governments of the EU's neighbours to acknowledge that this fossil winter is the total sum of anti-climate policies and complacent, inapt climate action, neglecting energy democracy.



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