

EU Energy ministers should make solar mandatory on Europe's buildings - a winning solution

- An EU-wide solar obligation needs to be implemented as soon as possible to have solar energy installed in new buildings and in buildings being renovated, to help lower energy bills, enhance energy security and help the EU meet its climate commitments;
- As the EU's Buildings Directive (EPBD) is currently being revised, a solar mandate needs to be a key discussion point for policy makers with the aim of it being adopted by mid-2023;
- Some countries in Europe such as Austria, France, Germany and Greece have already taken the initiative and have partly introduced solar mandates for their buildings. Now is the time to make it an EU norm.

Brussels, 11th October 2022 - EU Energy Ministers should support a EU-wide solar obligation to be adopted into EU legislation as soon as possible to help lower energy bills, enhance Europe's energy security and help the EU meet its climate commitments.

In their meeting on 25th October, Energy Ministers will likely decide their general approach on the European Performance Buildings Directive (EPBD), while there is strong public demand within EU countries to invite solar energy into their homes. As national governments are now scrambling to secure alternative energy sources, they should seize the opportunity to engage with citizens, communities and businesses to untap the large solar energy potential of Europe's buildings in order to accelerate the transition away from expensive and dangerous fossil fuels. This is where an EU solar mandate to oblige the installation of solar energy on Europe's buildings provides the answer.

The proposal for an EU rooftop solar initiative in the European Commission's REPowerEU package was highly welcomed in May, but to urgently address the current energy price and climate crises, a solar mandate needs to be more ambitious and implemented as soon as possible. A new [briefing](#) from Oeko-Institut and CAN Europe recommends that an EU solar mandate should be adopted by summer 2023 and implemented immediately for all new buildings and buildings going under major renovation including their roofs being substantially renewed. The mandate should apply to existing commercial properties and public buildings from 2027 onwards, targeting the largest roofs first to maximise solar energy potential as fast as possible.

In response to the energy price crisis and climate emergency, some Member States have become pioneers of a rooftop solar obligation. The EU needs to reflect this ambition and come up with a harmonised approach that would ensure scale up of solar energy potential. For example, the German state of Baden-Wuerttemberg announced earlier this year that the installation of solar panels on homes undergoing fundamental roof renovations will become mandatory on 1st January 2023. This follows the introduction of mandatory rooftop solar on all new non-residential buildings, open parking lots and public halls in the beginning of 2022. Other EU Countries including Austria, Denmark, France, Greece and the Netherlands have

all partly (and varying between countries) introduced solar mandates for their buildings as well as states and cities outside Europe - such as California and most recently, Tokyo.

*“As energy ministers sit down on the 25th October to discuss the amendments proposed in the EPBD, it is the opportune moment for them to begin discussing a solar mandate for Europe’s buildings. In the current context, it’s disheartening to see that there aren’t more roofs with solar PVs on them. **Making the installation of solar energy mandatory on our buildings is a ‘winning’ initiative that can empower Europe’s citizens, communities, and businesses to generate their own energy, help Europe wean itself off Russian Fossil gas and enhance its energy security, while also reducing emissions. Overall, putting us all on a path to a safer, energy secure future**”.* - said Seda Orhan, Renewable Energy Expert at CAN Europe.

*“To achieve our climate goals a much faster expansion of solar installations than in recent years is essential. An ambitious EU-wide solar mandate is a reliable tool for fast progress in equipping roofs with solar installations. **A clear schedule within the solar mandate gives the solar industry reliable signals for the ramp up of production capacities and training of installers to avoid bottlenecks in the realisation of the energy transition**”.* Said David Ritter, Senior Researcher at the Oeko-Institut.

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Notes to the Editor:

The Recommendations for an ambitious EU-wide solar mandate policy briefing presents how an EU solar mandate can be designed to be as effective as possible, based on the suggestions made by the European Commission. The briefing, authored by the Oeko-Institut and commissioned by CAN Europe, provides recommendations and the accompanying measures needed for a successful implementation of a solar mandate that ensures all citizens, communities and cities are involved in a practical manner.

Factsheet:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CqPDZ6m8YVhP2gXxoinasJFSjE9pXhoCaTlvkXK_Sd4/edit?usp=sharing

Full Briefing:

https://caneurope.org/content/uploads/2022/10/Oeko-Institut_2022_CAN-Policy-Brief_EU-solar-mandate.pdf

For a country comparison on the rollout of Rooftop solar PV in Europe, please find below CAN Europe’s Rooftop Solar PV Country Comparison Report:

<https://caneurope.org/rooftop-solar-pv-comparison-report/>