

25<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Open Letter to Energy Ministers of the EU Member States

**Subject: Energy Price Rises: Renovate Buildings to Protect Consumers**

Dear Minister,

In the context of your meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October, you will be debating the “toolbox” of measures tabled by the European Commission to address the rising energy prices. We call on you to **prioritise building energy renovation to protect consumers**.

The **increased price per unit** puts the spotlight once again on our vulnerability to high rates, and costs, of energy imports. In 2015, the EU imported 53% of its energy needs and we highlighted at the time (see our video [here](#)) that this was costing the EU around €400 billion per year. The situation has since degraded as the **EU imported nearly 61% of its energy needs in 2019**<sup>1</sup>. This dependence on imports must end or unpredictable price rises will occur again and again.

**Buildings** in the EU account for the largest share of final energy consumption, at a high of **40% of energy demand**. This is largely due to the poor energy performance of the building stock, with more than 97% below the A-level grading<sup>2</sup>.

The **truly sustainable answer** to tackle rising energy prices and protect consumers is to cut our energy demand through **deep energy renovation**. Thanks to technologies readily available, it is possible to reduce the energy demand of the building stock in the EU by 80%, thus drastically reducing the amount of energy needed in each building (homes, offices, hospitals, public buildings etc.) to create comfortable and healthy indoor environments, and leading to a 30% reduction in total energy use in the EU.

Direct financial support to vulnerable households is only a **stopgap solution**. The Commission acknowledged in its [communication](#) that Member States should “*step up investments on energy efficiency and in buildings performance, which lowers energy consumption and energy costs and eases pressure on energy markets*” as a medium-term measure to tackle energy prices.

More specifically, we **call on you** to take action to **accelerate building energy renovation** in two respects:

- Front-loading and prioritising the investments and reforms related to **building renovation in the National Recovery Plans** (see [Study](#)), in order to set a path that will benefit all, and in particular vulnerable consumers;
- Securing ambitious buildings elements in the **Fit-for-55 package and in particular Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)** as an indispensable driver to create visibility and future-proof our buildings.

A transformation of the building stock in the EU is urgently needed to achieve climate neutrality and protect consumers against variation in unit prices, thereby making comfortable, healthy indoor environments an affordable option for all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adrian Joyce".

Adrian Joyce  
**Campaign Director**

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<sup>1</sup> See Eurostat article [here](#)

<sup>2</sup> See BPIE publication [here](#).

**About the Renovate Europe Campaign:**

Renovate Europe is a political communications campaign with the ambition to reduce the energy demand of the EU building stock by 80% by 2050 through legislation and ambitious renovation programmes. Accelerating the rate of renovation is a key tool in the fight against climate change, and will deliver major benefits for people, their quality of life, and the economy. [www.renovate-europe.eu](http://www.renovate-europe.eu)

- #PrioritisePeople
- #AccelerateRenovation
- #Renovate2Recover

**REC Partners (October 2021)**

There are currently 49 partner companies and associations actively engaged in the work of the REC, of which 18 are National Partners based in Member States of the EU.

