



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Ms Alina-Ștefania GORGHIU  
President of the Senat  
Calea 13 Septembrie nr.1-3  
Sector 5  
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*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Senat for its Opinion on the Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “Short-Term Energy Market Interventions and Long Term Improvements to the Electricity Market Design – a course for action” {COM(2022) 236 final}.*

*As the Senat rightfully points out, an EU-wide action is needed to maintain our macroeconomic stability and to phase out our energy dependence from Russia. The European Commission has published several Communications this year, which aim to equip Member States with the necessary tools to mitigate the impact on energy prices on consumers and to end the Union’s dependence on Russian gas. Strengthening our strategic autonomy in the field of energy was precisely the objective of the Commission’s REPowerEU communication<sup>1</sup> and of its May REPowerEU Plan<sup>2</sup>. In both communications, the Commission set the goal of rapidly reducing our dependence on Russian fossil fuels by fast-forwarding the clean energy transition and joining forces to achieve a more resilient energy system and a true Energy Union, in a spirit of solidarity. To this end, the communications notably set ambitious targets for the roll-out of solar energy (600 GW of solar photovoltaic newly installed by 2030) and hydrogen (10 million tonnes of domestic renewable hydrogen production by 2030). Yet these communications identified other action streams, such as energy savings, diversification of fossil gas supplies (notably by increasing LNG imports and by diversifying pipeline sources) or the increase of the EU’s production of biomethane.*

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2022) 108 final.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2022) 236 final.

*Moreover, to get prepared for this winter, the EU has adopted, on proposals by the Commission, a Regulation setting out binding gas storage targets on 29 June 2022<sup>3</sup> and a Council Regulation on coordinated demand-reduction measures for gas on 5 August 2022<sup>4</sup>. Thanks to these Regulations and to the coordinated efforts by Member States, the EU average gas storage level exceeded 95% in November 2022 (well above the 80 % filling target) and, in the period August-November 2022, gas consumption diminished in the range of 20.2 % compared to the average in the previous 5 years.*

*The Commission is also acutely conscious of the difficulties faced by EU households and businesses because of the rising energy bills. Therefore, also based on a proposal by the Commission, the Council adopted on 6 October 2022 a Regulation on an emergency intervention to address high energy prices<sup>5</sup>. It consists of a package of four interdependent emergency market interventions, which aim at lowering the impact of gas prices on the prices paid by consumers, both households and industries: 1) a reduction of power consumption, to reduce electricity prices and to save gas; 2) a cap on market revenues of inframarginal technologies (e.g. nuclear, renewables) to decouple high gas prices from electricity prices; 3) a solidarity contribution on excess profits generated from activities in oil, gas, coal and refinery sectors; and 4) a redistribution to the final consumers.*

*On 18 October 2022, the Commission proposed a new emergency regulation to address high energy prices and ensure security of supply the coming winter<sup>6</sup>. The main tools of the proposal are joint gas purchasing, a proposal for price limiting mechanisms on the main European gas exchange (the Title Transfer Facility) as well as market intervention tools to limit gas price volatility, new measures on transparent infrastructure use and solidarity between EU countries and continuous efforts to reduce gas demand. The Council adopted it at its meeting on 19 December 2022.*

*The Commission proposed a new temporary emergency regulation on 9 November 2022 to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy sources<sup>7</sup>. The proposal complements previous emergency measures to tackle the exceptional situation on the energy markets and to accelerate the clean energy transition. The Council adopted it on 22 December 2022<sup>8</sup>.*

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<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EU) 2022/1032 of 29 June 2022 amending Regulations (EU) 2017/1938 and (EC) No 715/2009 with regard to gas storage, OJ L173/17.

<sup>4</sup> Council Regulation (EU) 2022/1369 of 5 August 2022 on coordinated demand-reduction measures for gas, OJ L 206/1.

<sup>5</sup> Council Regulation (EU) 2022/1854 of 6 October 2022 on an emergency intervention to address high energy prices, OJ L 261 I/1

<sup>6</sup> COM(2022) 549 final.

<sup>7</sup> COM(2022) 591 final.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/12/22/council-formally-adopts-regulation-to-speed-up-permits-for-renewable-energy-projects/>

*Subsequently, on 22 November 2022, the Commission proposed a market correction mechanism to protect citizens and the economy against excessively high prices. The Council formally adopted the regulation on 22 December 2022<sup>9</sup>.*

*In parallel, the Commission swiftly pursues its work on the revision of the electricity market design. It has started preparing a targeted long-term reform with a view to optimise the functioning of the European electricity market and to bring the benefits of lower cost renewables and low carbon technologies to consumers in a lasting way.*

*The Commission would like to assure the Senat that it is fully committed to strengthening EU energy strategic autonomy, and to alleviating as much as possible the impacts of this energy crisis, in a spirit of solidarity.*

*The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided addressed the issues raised by the Senat and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice-President*

*Kadri Simson  
Member of the Commission*

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/12/22/council-formally-adopts-temporary-mechanism-to-limit-excessive-gas-prices/>