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

Today, the European Commission unveiled its "toolbox" for EU governments to tackle the current energy price hike. The proposed toolbox will be discussed by heads of state and governments at the European Council summit on 21-22 October. The toolbox mainly includes short-term measures for member states by setting out options to target vulnerable households.

The Greens/EFA Group calls for support for low-income citizens, ramping up energy renovations and the further development of renewable energy, as this will allow for a combination of short-term, medium and long-term solutions.

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

"It is clear that the price hike is not caused by our climate policy and renewable energy but fossil fuel price hikes. We welcome the Commission's decision to investigate, as a matter of priority, any possible anti-competitive behaviour in the energy market. We need to know if Russia is playing poker with us to get gas flowing in Nord Stream 2. We must use a dual approach in order to quickly alleviate energy poverty and scale up renewable energy in order to make ourselves truly independent of Russia's political poker.

"In the short term, we need direct aid for low-income households and microenterprises instead of broad tax cuts. Member States' ETS revenues can be used, as they are 10,8 bn euro higher in the first three quarters of this year compared to the last. At the same time, we need to work on long-term goals and measures and increasing our efforts in energy renovation and making our energy system renewable. By 2040, we must switch to 100% renewable energies in the EU, which is good for citizens' wallets and relieves the burden on industry."

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

"The energy price crisis is a consequence of dependence on fossil fuels. Only with 100 percent renewable energies and sensible energy use can we prevent massive price jumps and existential emergencies. The principle of energy efficiency first must be implemented, because the cheapest and most environmentally friendly energy is the energy we don't use.

"In the short term, we need direct aid for low-income households and microenterprises that are particularly affected. All citizens have a right to a warm, bright home. However, tax cuts for all consumers and

interventions in the price setting mechanisms of the market are counterproductive. The latter indirectly constitute a subsidy for fossil fuels and weaken both the market conditions for renewable energies and the economic viability of renewable energies.

“In order to achieve the climate targets and provide all Europeans with clean energy, the billions in subsidies for fossil infrastructure such as gas pipelines must be ended and the money channeled into energy-efficient building modernisation and the expansion of solar and wind energy as well as storage infrastructure."

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