

The Renovation Wave must deliver on its commitment to tackle energy poverty

Dear Commissioner Simson,

As environmental NGOs, trade unions, social justice groups and civil society actors, we urge you to deliver on the EU Commission's commitment outlined in [the Renovation Wave](#) to alleviate energy poverty and provide deep renovations to over 35 million households.

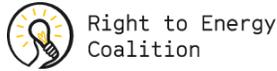
As you are aware, [over 50 million Europeans currently live in energy poverty](#), having to choose between heating their homes and having food on the table. This number is set to skyrocket with over [80 million households](#) at risk in light of the current gas crisis this winter.

[Europe's inefficient and unhealthy housing stock](#) is a significant root cause of energy poverty and our overconsumption of energy. With damp, mouldy housing contributing to a catastrophic public health burden of [over €140 billion per year](#) and linked to [over 100,000 premature deaths per year](#), this is a tragedy and a structural inequality which we have a responsibility to remedy. With the EU Green Deal, we now have the opportunity to **provide regulation, funding and technical assistance to deliver deep renovations programmes to energy poor households across Europe.**

The upcoming revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, in relation to the upward revised targets in the Energy Efficiency Directive, is pivotal to reach this goal. If designed well, it has the potential to boost renovations in the residential sector, improve the living conditions for millions of Europeans, meeting climate targets and create local, good quality jobs. **However this is not a given.** The EPBD has been reluctant to step into people's homes in the past, and yet, this is exactly where the European Green Deal can demonstrate the most tangible benefits and make a substantial difference to improve people's everyday lives. This is an opportunity that can not be missed for the EU to deliver on their promise of a Green Deal that leaves no one behind.

Energy efficiency is now identified as [the most effective solution](#) to tackle energy poverty as well as cutting carbon emissions. [A new study](#) by Cambridge Analytica shows a reduction in household energy bills by over € 400 per year after a deep renovation. Considering the average energy bill of the EU27 was € 1,500 in 2019, this represents huge savings. In addition, to tackle the climate crisis and achieve the Renovation Wave's objective of [deep renovating 35 million homes](#), this would reduce heating demand by 60% by 2030, meaning a reduction in household gas consumption equivalent to [25 of the world's largest LNG gas carriers](#) each year.

A [Eurofound](#) study also reports economic benefits; if we imagine all necessary renovations were achieved in the residential sector at once, the cost to EU economies would be repaid [within 18 months](#) by projected savings in lower health burden and better social outcomes. In other words, for every € 3 invested, € 2 would be paid back in one year.



The 'win-win-win' benefits of delivering deep renovations in the residential sector can not be underestimated, however this requires ambitious legislation to ensure that those who need renovations the most will feel the benefits of the Renovation Wave.

We have come together to call on the Commission to deliver a robust EPBD which takes active steps to tackle energy poverty, to provide better living conditions for millions and deliver on climate ambition to stay below 1.5°C.

One beneficial way to ensure worst performing buildings and energy poor households are prioritised, is to **introduce mandatory Minimum Energy Performance Standards across the residential sector with strong social safeguards**. Attached, we have prepared a briefing via [PDF](#) with stakeholders from a diverse range of backgrounds on 7 recommendations to cut carbon emissions, alleviate energy poverty and provide a greener, more socially fair Europe.

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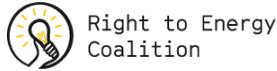
We strongly urge the Commission to:

1. Tackling unsafe and inefficient housing must be a priority in the EPBD
2. Introduce mandatory Minimum Energy Performance Standards across the residential sector with strong social safeguards. Member States must implement and monitor the impact at national level.
3. Substantial EU funds should be allocated for renovations, prioritising low-income households
4. Technical assistance must be provided to member states to develop and design effective low-income renovation programmes
5. Holistic one-stop-shops should be established which streamline assistance for renovations and renewable installations with specific schemes for low income and vulnerable households
6. Stronger protections for tenants rights must be outlined to prevent house affordability increases
7. An ambitious deep renovation standard is needed to ensure improved living conditions

In light of all the challenges for energy poor households, it would be a tragedy for the Renovation Wave, which offered a beacon of hope to millions of Europeans in mouldy, damp buildings, to fall short at this point. We hope you deliver on this commitment in the weeks to come and we remain at your disposal to provide suggestions on how to do so.

We would also like to remind you that the fight against energy poverty starts by ensuring decent wages and conditions for workers so that they can afford their basic energy needs. Unfortunately, jobs in the construction sector are too often characterized by low wages, zero-hour contracts, informal work and poor working conditions. In parallel to the EPBD revision, the Commission should take measures to ensure that new jobs created by the renovation wave will be quality jobs with decent living conditions to reduce inequalities.

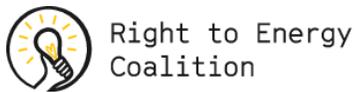
These recommendations come from allies and coalition members of the [Right to Energy coalition](#). This group unites environmental NGOs, trade unions, anti-poverty groups, social housing

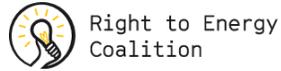


providers, health organisations and energy cooperatives across Europe to tackle energy poverty at an EU, national and local level. We work together to provide the most socially and environmentally resilient solutions in the EU Green Deal.

>>Sign on from allies and members<<

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[BRIEFING will be attached here as PDF](#) [How to alleviate energy poverty in the EPBD- 7 recommendations](#)