



Brussels, 8 March 2023

Honorable President von der Leyen,  
Honorable Executive Vice-President Timmermans,  
Honorable Commissioner Simson,  
Honorable Commissioner Reynders,  
Honorable Commissioner Breton,

Millions of people in Europe currently have to make the choice between either buying food for their family or heating their home. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, at least 50 million Europeans were living in energy poverty, with society's most vulnerable being worst affected. Russia's war against Ukraine and the subsequent energy crisis and general cost of living crisis has further exacerbated the phenomenon. The group of people that is at risk of poverty has also expanded and includes more and more people with an income from work.

The European Union has responded swiftly and united with RePower EU and other emergency measures to ensure energy supply and work towards energy sovereignty. The 'You are Europe' campaign of the Commission highlights that we are all in this together. Yet, a European framework for banning energy disconnections is still missing. Currently, consumers in some Member States are protected while others that are not able to pay their energy bills face the risk of disconnection. At the same time, we see that large fossil fuel companies are making record profits. Making sure no one is left behind will help us to stay united.

A European ban on electricity and heating disconnections would send an unprecedented message of European and societal solidarity among European people. It sends the strong signal that the EU is willing to protect an increasing number of people that are truly vulnerable in the unfolding cost of living crisis.

- In October 2022, the European Parliament [called for banning disconnections and home evictions](#) in this crisis.
- In December 2022, the Commission facilitated a voluntary agreement aiming at avoiding disconnections between the energy suppliers and consumer organisations for the current heating season.
- In the recent ITRE vote, Members called for a disconnection ban for gas supplies used for heating during winter times in its mandate for the upcoming trilogues on the Gas Directive.
- Several Member States have been practicing legal disconnection bans for several years, without experiencing abuse or large-scale fraud.

It is therefore key to anchor a Europe-wide mandatory electricity and heating disconnection ban for the most vulnerable of our societies now, especially in light of the next heating seasons. We therefore urge the Commission to go beyond facilitating voluntary commitments and to propose a ban on disconnections for vulnerable customers during critical times as an emergency legislative measure. We urge you to ensure rapid enforcement of the provisions regarding the requirement to define vulnerable customers and their effective protection.

Furthermore, this must become a permanent feature of the European energy market. We therefore count on your support for the European Parliament position on the Gas Directive and to include a ban on electricity disconnections as part of the proposals on the electricity market to be published on 16 March. Other measures such as bill deferrals, alternative payment plans and the abolishment of pre-payment meters for those that are already suffering are the measures to be put forward. A minimum electricity service as presented by Fondation Abbé Pierre as part of the [Greens/EFA energy poverty handbook](#) (2022) targeted to vulnerable households would complement the disconnection ban. In addition, stronger monitoring, transparency and data availability should inform the EU's action against energy poverty.

We count on you to keep houses warm and the lights on in Europe.

Yours sincerely,  
Greens/EFA Members of the European Parliament

Michael Bloss  
Marie Toussaint  
Pär Holmgren  
Bas Eickhout  
Ciaran Cuffe  
On behalf of the Greens/EFA Climate Campaign

Rosa D'Amato  
Kim van Sparrentak  
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On behalf of the Greens/EFA Cost of Living Campaign