

Commission calls on deploying district heating to accelerate the phase out of Russian gas imports

Brussels, 18 May 2022 - The European Commission [released today the REPowerEU communication setting out a detailed plan to phase out imports of Russian gas to Europe before 2030](#). This document recognises the critical role of district heating, urging Member States to develop and modernise district heating systems which can accelerate the reduction of gas demand, especially in densely populated areas and cities.

The REPowerEU communication acknowledges the important role of district heating, calling on Member States to “*accelerate the integration of large-scale heat pumps, geothermal and solar thermal energy*”. The European Commission also insisted on the need to “*develop and modernise district heating systems which can replace fossil fuels in individual heating (...) especially in densely populated areas and cities; exploiting industrial heat whenever available.*”

The REPowerEU package also proposes a dedicated toolbox to accelerate investments in clean energy as well as local and sustainable heating solutions. This includes legislative proposals on permitting as part of the RES Directive review, and the review of the Recovery and Resilience Plans at national level including new funding envelopes.

Aurélie Beauvais, Managing Director of Euroheat & Power, commented: “*The current events are a cruel reminder of Europe’s dependency on imported fossil fuels. Sustainable district heating networks are a proven solution to phase out fossil fuel use in heating, by connecting local renewable and waste heat sources to urban heat networks.*”

“*We are happy to see that the proposed [RRF guidance](#) singles out renewable and waste heat based district heating as investments of interest for national recovery plans. Nevertheless, access to RRF funding at local level has been a real challenge for our industry: we must solve this bottleneck to truly unlock projects on the ground. We should also empower and incentivise local authorities to carry out heat planning assessments to tap into the potential for renewable and waste heat.*”

According to [a recent assessment by German think tank Agora Energiewende](#), expanding and modernising district heating could help achieve around 125 TWh (~12.5 bcm) in gas savings by 2027.

The position of Euroheat & Power on REPowerEU is available [here](#).

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