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## **Regressive energy policy: Government questions key measures of the energy and climate plan!**

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The preliminary draft of the national energy and climate plan (PNEC) is currently being revised and discussed in the relevant parliamentary committee. The government has unexpectedly changed its mind, which could have significant consequences for achieving Luxembourg's climate targets.

This concerns the phase-out of fossil fuelled heating systems.

The facts: Almost 20% of national greenhouse gas emissions are caused by heating (and cooling) residential and commercial buildings.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that reductions are made here in order to meet the climate targets - a 55% reduction in emissions compared to 2005 by 2030. Particularly in the building sector, for which the PNEC envisages a reduction of -64% by 2030 and which last year, for the first time ever, narrowly met its reduction target. This is why it is particularly important to ensure good framework conditions so that fossil fuels - gas and heating oil - can be replaced by renewable energy sources.

This is why the draft PNEC - which was submitted in Brussels - stated that if a heating system needs to be replaced, the state will create supportive framework conditions in an initial phase to ensure that heat pumps are used. Voluntariness was therefore the top priority and the state set itself the target of motivating citizens through (financial) incentives to opt for a sustainable heating system replacement.

Only as a last resort was it mentioned that in a few years' time - if the climate targets were not achieved with these incentives and voluntary measures - mandatory rules might have to be issued. However, these would ONLY affect the replacement of defective heating systems - or those that no longer meet the standards - but not those that still work (although exceptions were still provided for).

But even this statement, formulated in such general terms, is now to be cancelled according to press reports! Why? There was simply no reason.

The government's decision is completely incomprehensible and downright negligent from a climate protection perspective. The government should at least leave the option open - and also take responsibility for itself - to take real action and promote the replacement of fossil fuel-based heating systems on a voluntary basis in the coming years.

- Why does the government now want to cancel a measure that has already been decided on and submitted to Brussels and does not have to come into force if the reduction targets are met? Does it not trust its own competence to set the right framework conditions in the coming years so that the voluntary approach - which it holds so highly - leads to the goal?
- This is all the more incomprehensible as, according to the government, the targets are currently being met - albeit only just. If this is the case, it is even less clear why a measure that has already been adopted (!) and would only come into force if it were not achieved should be cancelled. What is the government afraid of?
- It is also a fact that this measure is of central importance, particularly in the area of rented flats. Because if the pressure on owners to install renewable heating systems is completely removed, their interest in taking action here will unfortunately inevitably fall. After all, it is not them who bear the heating costs, but the tenants! This removes the incentive to invest in more economical heating systems.
- And last but not least: various announcements in the press indicate that the government intends to abolish or reduce the so-called 'top ups' in the area of subsidies for renewable energies, renovation work and heat pumps at the end of June this year. More socially selective subsidies are planned. It is now - just under two months before this deadline - not known in any form what this 'socially selective' subsidisation should look like. It is known that the installation of heat pumps etc. requires special support. Anyone who were to reduce this subsidy would sooner or later be largely responsible for the fact that the necessary phase-out of fossil fuel heating systems will not take place.

*Conclusion: the government's decision is not acceptable from a climate protection perspective. It is neither necessary (as it will only take effect in a few years if targets are missed) nor comprehensible.*

*In addition, the government has failed to provide any information on how the energy transition is to be organised in a socially just manner, although this has been announced for months.*

*Climate protection is not just a personal decision for each individual, but must be a clear political goal with appropriate instruments! Climate protection is non-negotiable. Responsibility cannot be transferred from the government to the individual.*

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