

# Saving Energy for Europe

## Contrasting EU states' measures

Measures taken by EU states to reduce gas and electricity consumption vary widely and remain insufficient to put the EU on track to reach its own energy saving targets.

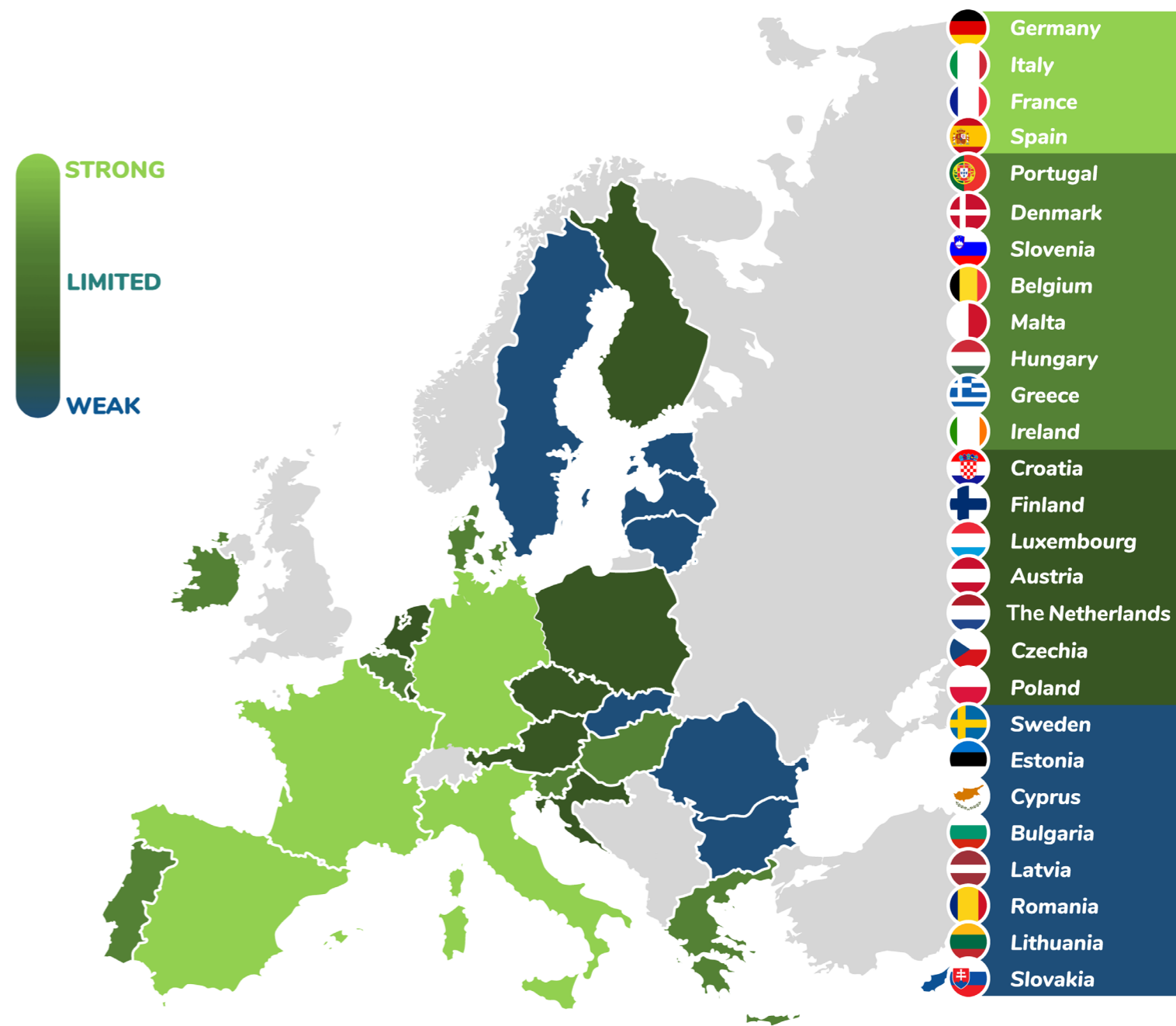


## Main findings

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) has examined gas and electricity saving measures adopted by EU states and the findings show large disparities across European countries:

- **8 out of 27 EU states** have not yet introduced any measure to reduce gas and electricity consumption.
- Only **12 EU states** have adopted **some mandatory energy reduction measures**.
- Countries importing large quantities of Russian gas such as Italy and Germany have introduced the **most robust measures on gas savings**.
- Less gas dependent countries like France and Spain are also at the EU **forefront of energy reduction measures**, targeting both public entities and the private sector, households as well as industry and small business.
- Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Eastern European states tend to have **weaker energy reduction measures** in place.
- Despite being among the **heavily gas-dependent countries** (between 30 and 40% of the energy mix), the Netherlands and Croatia have only introduced **voluntary gas saving measures**.
- Romania and Lithuania, despite their heavy reliance on fossil fuels, have not put **any measure at all** to reduce energy consumption.

## Measures to Reduce Gas Consumption in EU States



# Policy recommendations

Our research indicates that the measures to reduce gas and electricity consumption taken so far by EU states are insufficient to meet EU targets. EU targets may be reached if high prices lead to large consumers reducing their consumption. Measures to reduce energy usage also reduce the pressure on rising energy prices, thereby providing effective relief for households and industry.

Governments could do much more to reduce energy consumption. Sufficiency is fundamental not only to achieving climate neutrality, but also to ensure energy security, and yet we see little action.

**We propose five additional measures to facilitate gas and electricity consumption reduction in tandem with the current mosaic of EU states' initiatives:**

1

**Establish an EU energy savings monitoring task force** to track action both at national and EU level and verify the effective achievement of the targets for reducing energy consumption. Each EU state should designate a national contact point responsible for implementing measures of energy consumption reduction and reporting to the monitoring task force.

2

**Promote ample dissemination of the energy savings status through coordinated media across the EU.** This could provide positive feedback for citizens' energy-savings efforts. Simple messages could be shared in prime-time national TV news and on social media.

3

**Support the fast development of a market for managing gas and electricity demand.** This market could consist of a system that rewards the flexibility of consumers (even small, through aggregators) for the intermittent interruption of energy consumption.

4

**Accelerate the diffusion of digital technologies that enable automatic monitoring of energy flows such as smart meters.** This would allow people to monitor their energy consumption in real-time and make savings more salient.

5

**Introduce fair and harmonised, EU-wide rules** on energy sufficiency measures

## Background

In July 2022, EU states [signed a commitment](#) to reduce energy consumption by 15% between 1 August 2022 and 31 March 2023, in comparison to the average consumption of this period in the previous five years. This policy agreement is an effort to reduce Europe's reliance on Russian gas in anticipation of the growing demand that comes with the winter months. In September 2022, EU ministers [agreed](#) on a non-binding goal to reduce overall electricity demand by at least 10% until 31 March 2023 and on a mandatory target to reduce electricity consumption by 5% at peak hours.

## Research Methodology

The data for this memo is based on open-source research conducted September-November 2022. We tracked various measures relating to energy savings and efficiency. EU states are assigned scores based on the stringency, comprehensiveness and timeliness of the measures they have implemented. The scores are indicated by the colouring in the map in the previous page. The brightest green countries have the most stringent, comprehensive measures that were implemented early in the autumn, while the dark blue countries have not yet implemented any voluntary or mandatory measures.

click [here](#) to read the full report

