

# European Grandparents for Climate Newsletter

Number 1 – September 2022



## **European Grandparents for Climate: we owe all children a planet Earth as wonderful as the one we have enjoyed!**

In a number of countries worldwide, senior citizens have created or joined organisations that act on climate change issues in order to try to influence local, regional and national policies.

Here in Europe, the European Green Deal is the embodiment of these ambitions at the level of the European Union (EU). Therefore, several European Grandparents for the Climate organisations have decided to create a cooperative network focusing on the implementation of the Green Deal with the aim of exchanging information, knowledge and strategies while supporting actions across Europe.

Self-organised and politically independent, we are connected to many pro-climate organisations in our home countries.

## **What's going on in Europe today**

With the adoption of the Green Deal and its initiatives on energy transition, the European Union has finally made a real move for a more sustainable future. As is proper, the Green Deal includes basic Social Rights in all its initiatives.

The current energy crisis may negatively affect these EU policies. Are we just going to replace Russian gas with other fossil fuels and nuclear energy? Or will there be a balanced effort toward structural change in energy production and consumption? Will there be a sufficient sense of urgency to avoid and eradicate energy poverty? Market economy actors will not by themselves take the right directions; governments have to intervene and impose choices. This could be an opportunity to combine short-term interventions with structural investments in sustainable living.

It seems that the EU is taking steps in this direction. During the Extraordinary Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council of September 9, 2022, EU energy ministers exchanged views on possible emergency measures to counter high energy prices and to improve preparedness for next winter. (<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/58929/presidency-summary-220909.pdf>)

They invited the European Commission to propose by mid-September measures for capping the revenues of energy producers and to ask for a solidarity contribution from fossil fuel companies to be used to mitigate the impact of high energy prices on customers. They also asked for a proposal on a gas price cap and on coordinated electricity demand-reduction across the EU.

But the "State of the Union" speech by the President of the European Commission on September 14 shows that there is still not sufficient support among member states to make clear decisions, in particular on the price cap on gas.

### Events and links

#### ***Sustainable energy week***

The European Commission has launched a European Sustainable Energy Week: Going green and digital for Europe's energy transition. See below for more information:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/european-sustainable-energy-week-going-green-and-digital-europes-energy-transition-2022-sep-26\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/european-sustainable-energy-week-going-green-and-digital-europes-energy-transition-2022-sep-26_en).

#### ***Ban fossil fuel advertising and sponsorships in the EU!***

A coalition of non-profit organisations and grassroots groups (including Greenpeace, WWF, Oxfam, Friends of the Earth Europe) have launched a *Ban fossil fuel advertising and sponsorships in the EU!* campaign. The aim is to legally prevent the fossil fuel industry and vehicle, airline and maritime companies who use fossil fuels from advertising and sponsoring in the EU. They hope this will ultimately prevent them from spreading climate disinformation, which is delaying climate action. This initiative will weaken fossil fuel companies' influence, benefitting the struggle to prevent the worst effects of the climate emergency. We fully support this campaign and their call to sign the petition on <https://banfossilfuelads.org/>.

### A European newsletter

In order to keep as many as possible sister organisations and interested individuals informed about our common actions, views and positions, we will publish this Newsletter at least three times a year. We will aim to have a "**down to Earth**" section to signal remarkable local initiatives; a "**what's going on in Europe**" section to bring news from the European level; and a "**beyond Europe**" section to link up with partner organisations and developments worldwide.

Each issue will include the latest news about policy and practice developments at the European level. We will focus on European Union institutions, including civil society organizations and NGOs: their vision, positions and actions with regard to climate change.

A short portrait of one or two national or regional Grandparents for Climate organisations will be drafted.

Participating organisations are invited to signal important national developments in policies, but also to describe innovative practices.

Of course, we will use the Newsletter to call for common European actions and activities.

***We most welcome your contributions for our next newsletter by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2023.***

## **An action that is down to Earth**

### ***Powersaver game***



Game playing can lead to lasting behaviour changes. That is the conclusion of a recent PhD study by Jan Dirk Fijnheer at Utrecht University (NL). Fijnheer's research is based on the Powersaver Game: an online game that challenges households to reduce their energy consumption for a few weeks with concrete savings activities. The household's smart energy meter is linked to the game, so participants can immediately see their results. Fijnheer compared a total of almost 50 households. Some of them played the Powersaver Game, while others received the exact same information via an energy-savings app, but without the game elements.

The experiments demonstrated that the Powersaver Game helped households save up to 30 percent more energy than households that used an energy-savings app. Furthermore, after playing the game, they kept up the conservation activities for longer than the households in the control group. Results showed that the participants were also more involved. The households who played competitively saved even more energy.

To learn more, visit:

[https://www.myscience.org/news/wire/reducing\\_energy\\_bills\\_with\\_a\\_serious\\_game-2022-uu](https://www.myscience.org/news/wire/reducing_energy_bills_with_a_serious_game-2022-uu) and watch the Powersaver Game trailer:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxnc\\_DI6FBs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxnc_DI6FBs).

## **National Grandparents for Climate organisations – an example**

### ***Norway***

The Norwegian Grandparents' Climate Campaign (GCC) was formed in 2006 by a group of concerned elders, many of whom formerly held influential positions in Norwegian society.



Today, GCC is an independent grassroots organization with well over 6000 members, with regional groups across Norway and run by a members' steering-committee. GCC has proved a significant voice in the public debate on the state of Norway's climate policy at home and abroad.

We are often on the streets with our banners and slogans, we write in the media, we organize debates, we engage with Parliament and the political process, we follow international climate meetings and we use song and music actively.

Big issues facing Norway and the GCC in the coming years:

- Norwegian and international drilling for oil in the Arctic
- A phase out of new oil licenses and exploration
- Continued focus on the transportation sector
- The infinite economic growth syndrome

GCC has adopted Article 112 of the Norwegian Constitution as our guiding principle for climate action and climate justice. It guarantees: "Every person has the right to an environment that is conducive to health and to a natural environment whose productivity and diversity are maintained. Natural resources shall be managed on the basis of comprehensive long-term considerations which will safeguard this right for future generations as well."

For more information, click here:

<https://www.besteforeldreaksjonen.no/about-the-grandparents-climate-campaign/>