

Civil society to the European Commission “Phase out domestic gas cooking appliances to protect health”

In a [joint letter](#) sent today, the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and 14 other signatories call upon European Commission executive vice-president Frans Timmermans and EU Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson to phase out domestic gas cooking appliances, as they endanger Europeans’ health.

Gas stoves release toxic pollutants that are linked to a number of health problems, such as asthma in children, and coughing, wheezing or difficulty breathing in respiratory disease patients. A significant 7,3% of cases of paediatric asthma in the EU-27, which cost society an estimate 3.5 billion Euros per year, could be avoided if gas stoves were removed from homes – according to a forthcoming study by independent research organisation TNO. The study also reveals that levels of indoor nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) often exceeding the World Health Organization standards, applicable both for indoor and outdoor air quality, can be found in kitchens using gas.

Despite gas stoves representing this danger to human health, indoor air pollution from gas cooking remains unregulated at the EU level, the letter notes. The signatories of the letters, who are several health and environmental civil society organisations, ask the European Commission to phase out the sale of gas cooking appliances by setting NO₂ emission limits for stoves through the ongoing revision of the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling on Cooking appliances.

In addition to being an effective tool to improve energy efficiency, Ecodesign legislation has a “substantial potential” to [contribute to “reduced air pollution”](#) and standards for emissions of nitrogen oxides have long been in place for other products such as space heaters.

This call from civil society comes ahead of the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Consultation Forum on Cooking appliances on 29 November.

At the meeting, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission’s scientific advisory department, will present its study “[Preparatory study of ecodesign and energy labelling measures for domestic cooking appliances](#)” which cautions against the dangers of cooking as a “significant source of indoor pollutants” and points to NO₂, carbon monoxide (CO) and unburned methane being released by gas stoves.

The global movement against gas stoves is growing. On the same day of the letter’s release, a new coalition is being launched to promote universal access to safe, fossil-fuel-free, affordable and sustainable cooking. The [Global Cooksafe Coalition](#) brings together organisations from the spheres of public health, property and the built environment, fair food, renewable energy, energy efficiency, aid and development, and climate change science and advocacy.

Dr Milka Sokolović, EPHA Director General, said: *“We must stop burning fossil fuels in our homes. Given the evidence on childhood asthma and other health problems linked to gas cooking, the EU must live up to its commitment to the Health in All Policies approach and support and accelerate the transition to clean cooking through Ecodesign legislation.”*

Nicole Kearney, CLASP Europe Director, said: *“Gas cooking is also undermining EU economic development plans and the climate agenda. We found that asthma related to gas cooking costs the EU €3.5 billion and individual taxpayers €25 annually. Further, research shows that cooking on gas releases harmful emissions including nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, ultra-fine particles and methane – a fossil gas that, per molecule, has 80 times the global warming potential of CO₂.”*

Carolina Koronen, Programme Manager at ECOS, said: *“Gas cooking appliances are not only a health hazard. They are extremely inefficient compared to their electric counterparts, and they have no place in a renewable-based energy system. Phasing out gas appliances from kitchens is needed to bring European homes out of the fossil fuel era.”*

The full letter can be read [here](#).

Media Contact:

Cristina Pricop - Junior Policy Manager, EPHA

cristina.pricop@epha.org

+32 499 35 12 89/ +40 749 527 020

Notes to Editors

Full list of signatories of the joint letter to the European Commission: European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), CLASP, Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS), European Academy of Paediatrics, European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Global Cooksafe Coalition, Polish Society for Health Programs, Bulgarian Association for Patients' Rights Defence, Institute for Health and Environment (Inštitut za zdravje in okolje), Respire, GLOBAL 2000 - Friends of the Earth Austria, Kyoto Club, ECODES, Natuur & Milieu, Bond Beter Leefmilieu

EPHA is an umbrella public health NGO, with national and European members representing health professionals, public health organisations, and patients and disease-specific groups. We work on different public health-related topics such as global health, including air pollution, a cross-border threat and the biggest environmental health risk in Europe.