

EN

P-001480/2026

Answer given by Mr Dombrovskis
on behalf of the European Commission
(26.6.2026)

The Commission has been stressing that, in responding to the recent surge in energy prices, the EU should heed the lessons from the past energy crisis, when Member States incurred large fiscal costs by providing mostly untargeted support, and often distorting the price signals which help reduce demand of fossil fuels.

In this vein, the AccelerateEU Commission Communication adopted on 22 April 2026¹ aims at advancing long-term energy independence, but also at bringing immediate, targeted, and temporary relief to vulnerable households and industries, while preserving the incentives to reduce energy demand. Addressing the immediate consequences of the crisis, while strengthening Europe's energy security, resilience and affordability is also the rationale behind the Middle East Temporary State Aid Framework adopted on 29 April 2026². It is also crucial to protect the credibility of the EU fiscal framework, which works as a guarantor of the sustainability of public finances, in particular for those Member States which have high deficit and debt levels.

Against this background, on 3 June 2026, the Commission proposed a targeted broadening of the scope of the current national escape clause for defence spending to accommodate the measures undertaken since February 2026 to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels and thereby contribute to Europe's security and defence, without raising the overall cap of 1.5% of gross domestic product (GDP)³. The flexibility allowed for measures aimed at reducing dependency on fossil fuels would be capped at 0.3% per year with a cumulative maximum of 0.6% of GDP until 2028. Existing fiscal sustainability safeguards remain fully in place.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52026DC0370>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/2593/oj/eng>.

³ https://reforms-investments.ec.europa.eu/publications-0/2026-european-semester-spring-package-communication_en.