



## THE EESC AND THE CITIZENS' ENERGY PACKAGE

There can be no full European citizenship without energy. This is the fundamental concept underlying Opinion TEN/854 on the Citizens' Energy Package, which sees citizens involved as energy consumers and producers in the delicate phase of energy transition we are currently experiencing. The Opinion was approved during the meeting of the Transport, Energy and Infrastructure Section (TEN) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) held in Brussels last week. The energy transition is not only about technologies and targets, but also about trust, protection and participation, which should form the basis of a social pact for a citizen-led energy transition. The Citizens' Energy Package aims to make the transition to clean energy fairer and more inclusive by providing European citizens with concrete tools for protection and participation, placing them at the heart of the energy system. This Commission initiative, which is due to be presented shortly, comes at a time of persistently high levels of energy poverty in the European Union, strong public mistrust of the energy market, ineffective national procedures for transposing EU legislation on energy communities, and uneven adoption of citizen participation and energy sharing models across Member States. In the ongoing debate in the EU on energy, individuals

are often referred to as "consumers", but they should instead be considered "citizens", i.e. members of a political community with rights in the field of energy. «For energy citizenship to have value - said Councillor Ulgiati - citizens must have structured mechanisms in place to help them define and monitor energy policies. Furthermore, it is necessary to introduce the concept of inter-generational equity, ensuring that the decisions taken today do not harm future generations. Only in this way - concluded Ulgiati - will the transition from "consumer" to "citizen" be achieved, which is essential for the active involvement of people in the transition to a secure, sustainable and affordable energy system».



## EU PARLIAMENT, STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

"Europe is engaged in a struggle for our future". This is the opening line of the 2025 State of the Union address that European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen delivered a few days ago before the European Parliament in Strasbourg, the first of her second term. In the introduction to her speech, the President of the European Executive described the drama of a global context in which a clash for a new world order based on power is looming, and in which Europe must respond by fighting for a united Continent that knows how to live in peace. The tool for overcoming the many challenges facing the European Union is to stren-

gthen its unity among Member States, among EU Institutions and among pro-European democratic forces. To this end, a "new Europe" must emerge that can carve out a place for itself in a world where "many major Powers have an ambiguous or openly hostile attitude towards it". In her speech, von der Leyen gave priority to the conflict in Ukraine and the humanitarian tragedy in Gaza, announcing new initiatives to be taken by the Commission, including the adoption of a framework of actions providing for the partial suspension of the association agreement with Israel on trade issues and sanctions to be imposed on extremist ministers in Netanyahu's Government and violent

settlers. Condemning Russia's latest massacres of Ukrainian civilians and the intimidating violation of Polish and European airspace by Russian drones, President von der Leyen announced a new programme called "Qualitative Military Advantage" and a Drone Alliance to support Ukraine's military capabilities. To strengthen the EU's capabilities, she revealed that a roadmap for common defence would be presented at the upcoming informal European Council in Copenhagen.

