

Europe stores energy in summer and uses it in winter

<div class="df_qntext">What's happening to Europe's energy systems this summer?

Attracta Mooney in London, Alice Hancock in Brussels and Amy Kazmin in Rome Simply sign up to the Climate change myFT Digest -- delivered directly to your inbox. Europe's energy systems have come under intense strain this summer as repeated heatwaves have driven up demand for electricity and forced plants to pause production.

<div class="df_qntext">Why are Europe's energy systems under strain this summer?

Europe's energy systems have come under intense strain this summer as repeated heatwaves have driven up demand for electricity and forced plants to pause production. June was the hottest on record in western Europe, fuelling a rise in the use of air conditioning and prompting a sharp increase in electricity prices.

<div class="df_qntext">What is energy saved in summer?

Energy saved in summer is energy we can use in the winter. Saving energy now allows Europe to store more gas for the winter, when demand is higher. The Commission therefore proposes that all Member States reduce gas demand by 15% from 1 August 2022 to 31 March 2023. These measures will be voluntary at first.

<div class="df_qntext">Why are European homes so difficult to keep cool in summer?

A significant proportion of European homes are very difficult to keep cool in summer due to the way they are designed. Each winter, millions of Europeans struggle to keep their homes warm in freezing temperatures as electricity bills soar.

<div class="df_qntext">Which energy products does the EU need?

For its own consumption, the EU also needs energy that is imported from non-EU countries. In 2023, the main imported energy product category was oil and petroleum products (including crude oil, which is the main component), accounting for 65% of energy imports into the EU, followed by natural gas (25%),

<div class="df_qntext">Are Europeans too hot in summer?

For a significant proportion of people in Europe, the latter isn't possible. Up to 19 per cent of European households are not comfortably cool in summer, according to data from Eurostat. Poor insulation, a lack of ventilation, no protection from the sun and sparse air conditioning options are leaving millions exposed to potentially dangerous heat.

A seasonal split shows for 31 European countries that every 1 °C temperature drop in winter causes a rise in electricity demand by 8 kWh/yr/capita via the change in heating degree day, ...

The seasonal load curve also comes with a maximum in winter and a minimum in summer, but the seasonal variation strength is much smaller than for the wind power generation. As a ...



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Solar electricity generation on a sunny summer day Summer here means a lot of sunny days, and because of that the summer months are the best overall for my electricity generation. But ...

For years, the energy sector has discussed the Dunkelflaute, a dark, windless period in winter when both solar and wind generation are low. The Hitzeflaute is its summer equivalent, though ...

With Europe having seen strong gas storage withdrawals in the final weeks of 2024, the market is now focused on the level of stocks for the remainder of the winter and the subsequent need to refill again ...

In June and July 2025 Europe experienced a heatwave, with local temperatures exceeding 40°C. This triggered an increase in electricity demand as the use of air conditioners soared. This, coupled with ...

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