

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

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# ENOUGH GAS FOR WINTER

Madrid.—European Union countries have enough gas in storage to last through winter, but the surge in prices shows the need to quickly switch to renewable sources and reform the EU gas market, European Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson said.

“Gas underground storage is above 75% across Europe. This level is lower than the ten-year average, but adequate to cover the winter season needs,” she told the European Parliament.

Speaking in a debate on the

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surging gas prices that have hit the poorest EU citizens and are impacting business investment decisions and threaten to slow the economic recovery, Simson said she would soon present a plan to overhaul the gas market.

“By the end of the year, I will propose a reform of the gas market, and will review in that context issues around storage and security of supply,” she said.

One of the ideas, proposed by

Spain, is for the EU to buy gas jointly to take advantage of the power of its single market of 450 million consumers and create a strategic EU gas reserve. Simson said joint procurement and storage were worth analysing.

She said while the long-term response to higher gas prices was to increase production from renewable sources, in the short term EU governments could provide targeted support to con-

sumers through direct payments to those most at risk of energy poverty, cut energy taxes and shift charges to general taxation.

To help citizens, governments could use some of the money from selling carbon permits under the Emissions Trading System, she said.

At the same time competition authorities need to curb speculation in energy markets, she added. The Commission is to present a list of measures in line with EU laws next week.



**P** rime Minister Boris Johnson vowed to radically re-shape Britain yesterday, exhorting his Conservative Party faithful to help the government press on with tackling regional inequality by ending “long term structural weaknesses” in the economy.

In a speech to end his party’s annual conference, Johnson, renowned for his overarching optimism in all things, concentrated on what he called the Conservatives’ successes hoping to draw a line under a series of crises buffeting Britain.

After a week when Johnson has been forced to defend his government against complaints over fuel shortages, fears for Christmas food supplies and farmers having to destroy their produce, the prime minister wants to reset his agenda.

Firing up his party by invoking former prime minister Margaret Thatcher, trumpeting the government’s vaccine roll out and taking aim at the main opposition Labour Party, Johnson presented Britain’s future after COVID-19 and Brexit as a

## To applause and laughter, PM Johnson vows to reshape Britain



time for change. “The answer to the present stresses and strains, which are mainly a function of growth and economic revival, is not to reach for that same old lever of uncontrolled immigration to keep wages low,” he told an appreciative crowd. “The answer is to control immigration to allow people of talent to come to this country, but not to use immigration as an excuse for failure to invest in people in skills, and in the equipment, the facilities and machinery ... they need to do their jobs.”

“To deliver that change we will get on with our job of uniting and levelling up across the UK - the greatest project that any government can embark on.”