

I Press Release

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## Shortfall in Energy Efficiency support for SMEs

A survey\* conducted among 10 EU Members States reveals that half of them still lack comprehensive financial support measures for energy audits and do not provide grants for the implementation of energy management systems (EMS), as required by the Energy Efficiency Directive. The study was conducted by EUROCHAMBRES to assess the availability of SME-support programmes for energy efficiency, two and a half years after the deadline for transposing the directive into national law. Moreover, the study shows that existing support schemes are often not SME-friendly, due to low co-funding rates and high minimum thresholds for investments.

*“The European Commission should pressure and support Member States in fulfilling their legal obligations and beef up the ‘energy efficiency first’ principle with adequate support schemes,”* urged Arnaldo Abruzzini, CEO of EUROCHAMBRES, at the final event of the STEEEP project in Brussels today.

### About STEEEP

The STEEEP project – coordinated by EUROCHAMBRES since 2014 – has shown that significant barriers to energy savings persist. Lack of time and human resources hamper SME energy efficiency measures. Moreover, limited financial resources restrict the translation of audit recommendations into actual implementation. This is why small companies need comprehensive financial and practical help to get things started. This includes support for audits, monitoring and the actual implementation of measures.

*“Chambers have a role to play in supporting SMEs in improving their energy efficiency and in facilitating the search for funding for energy investment,”* stated Philippe Dutruc, Chairman of EUROCHAMBRES’ Energy and Environment Committee. *“These financing schemes are often complex, so businesses need support if they are to benefit from them.”*

Within STEEEP, 36 European Chambers from 10 different EU countries provided 600 cross-sector SMEs with tailored training and guidance on effective energy management. The project’s success stories illustrate a selection of exemplary cases from participating SMEs that took the decision to pursue cost cuts through implementing an energy management strategy.

The STEEEP project is co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe of the European Union.

\* **Study on the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive:** <http://bit.ly/2kPzDeX>

**STEEEP Success Stories:** <http://bit.ly/2k8Ly8F>

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