

## Energy Efficiency Directive: incentives and targeted information rather than obligations

While supporting the aim of providing an encouraging legal framework to contribute to the EU's target of 20% increased energy efficiency by 2020, EUROCHAMBRES has certain concerns about the European Commission's new proposal for an Energy Efficiency Directive. The approach of binding measures would create unnecessary burdens compared to a voluntary approach based on advisory services to better inform and encourage energy consumers to increase energy efficiency.

*"As it has been rightly decided not to propose binding energy efficiency targets for the time being, proposing mandatory measures would be inconsistent with this approach and would create unnecessary administrative burdens. To overcome the existing obstacles to increased energy efficiency, the focus should rather be on flexible incentives, targeted information, further education of energy consumers and sharing of best practices among Member States",* commented Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES.

European business has already undertaken enormous efforts to increase energy efficiency and widely acknowledges the benefits of energy audits and energy management systems. It is in the companies' own best interest to optimize their energy management and to become more energy efficient in order to reduce costs. Chambers thus welcome the notion that audits resulting from energy management systems or voluntary agreements should also be eligible for the requirement to carry out regular energy audits. As for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the Commission rightly puts the emphasis on providing flexible incentives and better targeted information in order to support the uptake of energy audits and investments in energy efficiency.

Chambers also question the approach of obliging energy distributors and retailers to achieve energy savings for their customers, as they are not in a position to fully steer the consumption behaviour and actions of their customers. Besides the fact that administrative costs generated by savings obligations for energy providers might outweigh the benefits, such an approach also contradicts the supply and demand principles of a free market and would have a disproportionate impact on SMEs.

**EUROCHAMBRES views on the Energy Efficiency Plan 2011 can be downloaded from <http://www.eurochambres.eu/Content/Default.asp?PageID=1&DocID=3444>**

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Further information: Ms Marlene Gündler, Tel. +32 2 282 08 77, [guendler@eurochambres.eu](mailto:guendler@eurochambres.eu)  
Press contact: Ms Ralitsa Golemanova, Tel. +32 2 282 08 56, [golemanova@eurochambres.eu](mailto:golemanova@eurochambres.eu)  
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