

**PRESS RELEASE**

## Energy Paper can “light up” Europe, but liberalisation and business involvement are key

EUROCHAMBRES welcomes the Green Paper on Secure, Competitive and Sustainable Energy, adopted today by the European Commission, as a “light at the end of the tunnel” of Europe’s energy policy.

Pierre Simon, President of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *“This document represents a good basis for the future: energetic, environmental, but also economical. However, we believe much attention must also be paid to the demand side of the equation – in particular, the demand from smaller sized European companies. They must be involved in the development of the policy and in its implementation.”*

In particular, Chambers appreciate that, for the first time, the external dimension of energy policy is explicitly tackled in greater detail. Ironically, the European Community was built on energy, but yet it imports 50% of its energy. A coherent external policy would make it easier to reduce dependence on imported energy, to diversify natural gas supply and to strengthen energy partnerships.

But the question remains: at what price?

**Market liberalisation** – The internal market in energy is still not functioning, especially regarding interconnection capacities, non-discriminatory network access and liquidity in gas and electricity markets. Chambers demand independent regulatory bodies in all Member States to enforce liberalisation and safeguard competition.

**Involvement of SMEs** – The new Green Paper on Energy seeks to define new ways to become less dependent on imported energy focusing mainly on the energy supply side. However, an interface between supply and demand – especially from SMEs – is missing. EUROCHAMBRES urges consultation with all business, including SMEs, starting within the High Level Group of on Competitiveness, Energy and the Environment, from which SMEs have been banished.

**Extensive communication** – Finally, a more effective communication towards business would help to unleash the potential of energy efficiency. At the moment initiatives target schools, customers or specific sectors but not smaller enterprises.

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