

PRESS RELEASE**Energy Green Paper and EU Energy Market:
EUROCHAMBRES' answers**

High energy prices have critical effects on European competitiveness. Therefore, the two main questions raised at today's European Parliament hearing on the Green Paper on Secure, Competitive and Sustainable Energy – and which clearly have an impact on future energy prices – are of key importance for Chambers of Commerce as well. EUROCHAMBRES answers to these two burning issues.

1. What is missing from the Energy Green Paper?

“The Green Paper represents a good basis for a more intensive discussion on strategic energy policy issues. However, more attention must be paid to the demand side of the equation – in particular, the smaller sized European companies. As an important group of energy consumers and service providers, SMEs must be involved in the development of the policy and in its implementation”, said Pierre Simon, President of EUROCHAMBRES.

EUROCHAMBRES thus regrets that the High Level Group on Competitiveness, Energy and the Environment still doesn't include a representative speaking directly for smaller businesses.

2. How to encourage investment in Europe's single market in Energy?

In order to attract investment, the energy market has to be transparent and conditions predictable. In this respect, EUROCHAMBRES supports the Commission's inquiries into the functioning of the European gas and electricity markets, as well as its efforts to ensure non-discriminatory network access, adequate network and interconnection capacities, and effective regulation.

Investment can be further stimulated by speeding up permitting procedures for energy infrastructure at Member State level.

Mr Simon added: *“Energy efficiency should be promoted by offering incentives such as training and financial support, rather than by further regulation. Energy efficiency is a win-win solution that combines benefits for the environment with benefits for businesses and households.”*

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