

# PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN

2004



2009

*Commission de l'environnement, de la santé publique et de la sécurité alimentaire*

PROVISOIRE  
**2005/2210(INI)**

2.2.2006

## PROJET D'AVIS

de la commission de l'environnement, de la santé publique et de la sécurité alimentaire

à l'intention de la commission de l'industrie, de la recherche et de l'énergie

sur l'efficacité énergétique ou comment consommer mieux avec moins  
(2005/2210(INI))

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## **JUSTIFICATION SUCCINCTE**

There are several reasons why energy efficiency should be promoted in Europe. Decoupling economic growth and energy demand and achieving a reduction in the overall energy consumption is essential for Europe to reach its goals regarding sustainable development and the fight against climate change.

The recent crisis related to the distribution of Russian natural gas supplies, has put the spotlight on Europe's dependence on imported energy sources, which is projected to increase substantially in the years to come. Curbing our energy demand could be an important part of the solution to this problem. Improving energy efficiency is also likely to have a positive effect on employment in Europe and will help boost the competitiveness of European industry and is thus fully in line with the aims of the Lisbon strategy.

For the above reasons, the Draftsman welcomes the Commission Green Paper and the increase in Community efforts to improve energy efficiency.

Regarding the goals set in the Green Paper, these were determined at a time when oil prices were around 30 USD/barrel, whereas today, they are as high as 70 USD and expected to rise even further. This increase makes it seem appropriate that more ambitious targets be set than the 20% reduction of energy consumption outlined in the Commission proposal.

As a result of improved technology, appliances, vehicles and buildings are now available which use much less energy than before. A quick diffusion of these new technologies can help realise the potential for energy savings that we have today. However, we must be aware that replacing older products with new ones earlier than necessary has a series of negative environmental implications such as increased waste, more pollution as well as the consumption of raw materials during the production process. The Draftsman strongly believes that at all cost we must avoid sending a false message to the European consumers and public procurement agents that they can best help the environment by throwing everything away prematurely.

The compulsory labelling of household appliances under Directive 92/75/EEC has proved a great success and lead to significant improvements in the energy performance of these products. It is precisely this improvement which makes it necessary to systematically review the labelling categories to keep up with technological change by ensuring that the labels remain clear, giving valid information to consumers so as not to mislead them. (Today's refrigerator models, for example, are all rated above category C, but the labels still show a scale of A-G, which gives a false perception of the energy performance of a refrigerator with the rating of B.) The Draftsman believes that the effect of labelling systems could be further enhanced if labels were required to provide estimates of the actual operating costs during the life of the product in question.

Buildings are the largest users of energy in Europe and also have vast potential for increasing efficiency. Since only a small part of Europe's building stock represents the newest technological standards, it is necessary to invest in improving the energy performance of older buildings and not just establishing standards for new constructions. The Draftsman believes that priority should be given to housing estates of high rise blocks of flats where the savings

potential is the highest.

District heating systems are potentially more efficient than separate production, but in most places where these exist (notably the new Member States), the facilities operate with a great loss of energy. Therefore it is also very important to promote the modernisation of these systems, preferably linked to the modernisation of the buildings they supply. The Draftsman believes this is necessary in order to avoid local imbalances between the demand and the supply of heat.

The Draftsman believes that financing the initial investment is most often the main obstacle in the way of - otherwise beneficial - energy efficiency projects. Therefore he considers it important to promote new and innovative forms of financing, through Energy Service Companies (ESCO-s) and clearinghouse facilities, the creation of which generally requires external incentives. He believes that the great financial institutions, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BERD) and the World Bank also have a greater role to play in financing energy efficiency investments and should be encouraged to take up this responsibility.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

La commission de l'environnement, de la santé publique et de la sécurité alimentaire invite la commission de l'industrie, de la recherche et de l'énergie, compétente au fond, à incorporer dans la proposition de résolution qu'elle adoptera les suggestions suivantes:

1. souligne que le prix du pétrole qui sert de base à l'objectif d'économies d'énergie de 20%, objectif fixé par le Livre Vert, est aujourd'hui sensiblement supérieur, ce qui entraîne une augmentation substantielle de la rentabilité des mesures d'efficacité énergétique; invite par conséquent la Commission à éléver d'autant l'objectif fixé pour les économies;
2. souligne que pour les équipements utilisant de l'énergie (comme les bâtiments et les véhicules), l'objectif doit être de diminuer l'impact global sur l'environnement tout au long de leur cycle de vie; demande à la Commission d'initier un complément d'études, concernant également le secteur du bâtiment et des véhicules, de façon à déterminer quel est le cycle de vie minimum (y compris le moment optimal de leur remplacement afin de mieux préserver l'environnement);
3. estime que l'étiquetage est un moyen efficace de promouvoir l'efficacité énergétique et invite la Commission à poursuivre sur cette voie en procédant à la révision systématique des catégories d'étiquetage instituées par la directive 92/75/CE, en étendant l'étiquetage à de nouvelles catégories d'équipements et de véhicules, et en créant des étiquetages informant le consommateur sur les incidences réelles en termes de coûts;
4. souligne la nécessité d'élargir la portée de la directive 2002/91/CE relative à la performance énergétique des bâtiments à l'ensemble des travaux de rénovation et d'assurer un financement approprié pour accélérer la rénovation d'ensembles immobiliers présentant des possibilités optimales d'économie d'énergie; le cas échéant, ces projets seraient combinés à la remise en état des systèmes de chauffage urbain alimentant ces bâtiments;
5. souligne que les États membres devront adopter des programmes d'action nationaux en matière d'efficacité énergétique, fixant chaque année des objectifs contraignants;
6. souligne la nécessité de promouvoir la création d'instruments de type "clearinghouse" et de Sociétés d'Économie Énergétique (ESCO) afin de favoriser la mise en oeuvre de projets d'efficacité énergétique;
7. invite la Commission et les États membres à inciter les grands instituts de financement à donner la priorité aux investissements d'efficacité énergétique et à faire la part, lors de la sélection des projets éligibles, des aspects d'efficacité énergétique.