



The European Consumers' Organisation

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Johannes Kleis: +32 (0)2 789 24 01
Date: 22/06/2011
Reference: PR 2011/027

Energy Efficiency: How to make it work for Europe's consumers?

Following today's European Commission proposal of an Energy Efficiency Directive, Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation commented:

"Efficient energy use is one of the main contributions consumers can make to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. So, to make this work, any measure which promotes energy efficiency must look at the consumer benefit and the price tag that comes with it.

"Again much focus has been placed on 'smart meters'¹. They undeniably can bring benefits for consumers, but it's also clear that not all households will benefit equally from the device's energy saving potential, if at all. Some households are too small to make energy savings and vulnerable consumers like the elderly or those of low income often cannot shift their energy consumption to cheaper off-peak periods. So, the roll-out of smart meters shouldn't be mandatory and the costs for installing them fairly shared between consumers and industry. Ultimately, smart meters will only achieve their energy saving potential when they are really consumer-friendly for instance through an in-house display or when the consumption rate is shown in monetary terms.

"Simple and easy-to-access information on their consumption rate is the precondition for electricity customers to save energy. Accurate energy bills and free access to real time consumption rates are key in allowing consumers to have more energy efficient behaviour."

ENDS

¹ Smart meters use new communication technologies and have – among other features – the ability to measure electronically a households' electricity consumption and to communicate this information with the energy supplier.

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