

# INFORSE-EUROPE

International Network for Sustainable Energy - Europe

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## **Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Must have Top Priorities in new EU Energy Strategy**

*Comment to the New European Commission's  
Green Paper for an Energy Strategy and Policy for Europe.*

INFORSE-Europe welcomes the new emphasis on European energy security and sustainable development that the European Commission sets out in its Green Paper released today. While the paper does provide a framework for discussions, it is important that the EU leaders follow-up with visions for a transition to a future energy system relying on renewable energy and energy efficiency, and set ambitious targets for the development, such as 25% renewable energy by 2020 for EU-25. This is target supported by INFORSE-Europe and by many others.

From INFORSE-Europe we welcome in particular the development of an Action Plan on energy efficiency. The large potentials for energy efficiency are by far not used. For more than a decade, much too little emphasis has been given to energy efficiency. In this decade when the internal EU energy market was established, energy consumption has increased while efficiency improvements have lost pace. Regulation is needed to capture the potentials, research and development is needed to steer the technological development into energy efficiency, and campaigns must bridge the gap in-between. A good example of the lack of regulation is that today the consumers cannot even see how efficient a new television set is in the shop. Among others, there should be progressive labels to inform the consumers and efficiency standards to phase-out inefficient products of all types. With a comprehensive set of actions it is possible to save much more than the proposed 20% of the energy consumption in a cost-effective way. With the increasing energy prices, the economic potential for energy efficiency grows rapidly. With current energy prices, the potentials is in many sectors rather 40-50% of the energy consumption than just 20%, seen on a 15-20 years horizon.

A strategic energy technology plan, as proposed in the new Green Paper, can be an important tool to steer support for new technologies. It should focus on key challenges for large-scale use of energy efficiency and renewable energy. As an example: the slow development of renewable energy for heating and for cogeneration of heat and electricity (CHP) is one of the reasons for increasing fossil fuel use. Timely actions on national level and on EU level can change this. The strategic energy technology plan should help initiating such actions as soon as the problem is realised.

INFORSE-Europe will take an active part in the debate on a new European energy policy and many of the 70 NGOs that are members of the network will follow in on national level. INFORSE-Europe has put forward a vision for the transition of the energy systems of the EU countries to rely on renewable energy, with a strong emphasis on energy efficiency. INFORSE-Europe is also preparing a dialogue on energy security with the new director of DG TREN Matthias Ruete and MEP Claude Turmes on March 29, 2006 in Brussels as part of the European Sustainable Energy Policy Seminar 2006, organised by INFORSE-Europe and others.

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