

Joint Response from the Social Partners in the European Electricity Industry to DG Energy public consultation

EURELECTRIC / EPSU / EMCEF

Joint response to the public consultation (June 2010)

“Towards a new Energy Strategy for Europe 2011 - 2020”

The social partners in the European electricity industry, represented by EURELECTRIC for the employers and EPSU and EMCEF for the trade unions, welcome the initiative by DG Energy to engage with stakeholders in shaping the strategy to meet the 20-20-20 targets by 2020.

Notwithstanding the contribution that each organisation will individually submit, the social partners jointly agree on the following messages:

- DG Energy and Social Partners should explore ways to cooperate in addressing the social dimension of future energy policies

In this respect we, as social partners, have long been working together in addressing the social dimension of energy policies. We have recently produced two toolkits, on [restructuring](#) and on [demographic change and age management](#), which address issues that we believe are very complex and of fundamental importance in addressing the challenges particularly affecting our sector. Also we have issued important joint opinions on social issues, most recently on [Social Aspects of Corporate social responsibility in the European Electricity Industry](#). We would be happy to share with DG Energy the results of these studies and opinions and discuss the focus of future activities, and how the social dialogue committee can play a role in ensuring employment related issues are taken into account

- DG Energy - supported by DG Employment - should define a process to involve Social Partners in the Impact Assessment of new policy measures

The Impact Assessment guidelines state the following:

Initiatives with social implications for a specific sector

Commission Decision 98/500/EC stipulates that each sectoral social dialogue committee, for the sector of activity for which it is established, 'shall be consulted on developments at Community level having social implications'. You should therefore verify whether your initiatives will create social implications for a sector for which a sectoral social dialogue committee exists. If this is the case a consultation of the committee has to be organised with the assistance of the Unit 'Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations' in DG EMPL.

We are willing to discuss with DG Energy on how to properly structure a dialogue between DG Energy, DG Employment and Social Partners that would enable the Commission to involve social partners at an early stage.

- DG Energy and Social Partners should work together to identify measures to tackle job skills and needs in moving to a low-carbon energy system

To this extent, social partners are engaged in a study to assess job skills and needs for the electricity project to assure a ["just transition" to a low carbon electricity generation](#). This is an important contribution to the understanding of the social impact of a move towards a low carbon energy system. We would be happy to share the results of the project with DG Energy on the occasion of the final Conference that will take place December 13th, 2010 and hence discuss the way to properly ensure the matching between new technologies and workforce in our European sectoral scenario.

Finally the social partners, also taking into account the current adverse financial and economic crisis and complexity of recovery, reiterate their commitment in supporting the European Commission to address social challenges related to energy policies and willingness to engage with the European Commission in a constructive and fruitful cooperation, with the overall aim of building consensus which is, we firmly believe, of outmost importance to deliver an effective and sustainable internal electricity market.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the European Electricity Social Partners, the President of the Electricity

Social Dialogue Committee

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