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**European Gas Industry Joint Submission to Consultation on:  
Towards a new Energy Strategy for Europe 2011-2020**

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

The European social partners for the gas industry, EPSU/EMCEF for the trade union side and Eurogas for the employers/companies side, have considered with interest the Consultation paper “ *Towards a New Energy Strategy for Europe 2011-2020.*” Europe’s energy policy faces many challenges as outlined in the consultation paper. We are convinced that the gas industry will continue to play a major role during the stages when Europe will move towards a decarbonised economy. There are many elements that deserve comments and each of the social partners will comment on this separately.

As social partners we wish to make the following observations:

- The consultation paper pays limited attention to the social dimension of Europe’s energy policy especially its role in creating employment both directly in the energy sector and indirectly in the broader economy. We ask the Commission to devote more attention to this and indicate what the employment consequences of different scenarios and measures are for different energy sectors such as the gas sector.
- The consultation lacks urgency in addressing the issue of the emerging skills and competency problems for the European Labour market and the different energy sectors including the gas industry within that. It becomes more and more evident that a lack of skilled and competent staff can become a constraint on further development of the energy sector and energy services. We miss the integration of the Commission’s work on the *Future of Jobs and Skills* in the energy strategy. The importance of the skill dimension has been underlined by the recent Employment Council (7 June) and its Council Conclusions on “New Skills for New Jobs: The way forward”. We expect initiatives of the DG Energy to discuss this with the social partners. We have contributed to raising awareness of the dimension of the challenge with our joint toolkit “ *Demographic Change and Competencies for the European Gas Industry*” . Such initiatives and consultation are in line with the Council resolution as well as with the Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines and the Flagships of the Europe 2020 Strategy.
- We appreciate the assistance of Commission staff in our meetings of the sectoral social dialogue committee. We value their contributions. As social partners we wish to confirm that we would appreciate to be more consulted in the work of the DG Energy and at an early stage. This would allow us to consider with the Commission the social implications of proposals. A stronger role in the impact assessment process would be welcome as well. Forthcoming opportunities for this will be the work on Infrastructure and the Energyroad Maps 2050 which will be developed. We also suggest to consider with DG



Energy the most appropriate way to contribute as social partners to the impact assessment and for the social partners to be informed and consulted on the results.

- We suggest that once a year the social partners meet with DG Energy representatives to be informed of the annual work plan and discuss what the contribution can be of the social partners.

As European social partners we wish to contribute to the development of Europe's energy policy ensuring it is safe, secure, reliable, affordable and sustainable.

Yours sincerely,

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