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Energy efficiency

MEPs endorse deal on new rules as key step to meeting 2020 target but await action on emissions trading scheme

The European Parliament energy committee (ITRE) today endorsed a deal on new EU legislation on energy efficiency and savings (1). Green MEP and draftsman/rapporteur for the European Parliament Claude Turmes welcomed the vote but cautioned that more needs to be done if the EU to meet its target of reducing energy consumption 20% by 2020, as well as underlining the need for related action to address the glaring flaws in EU's emissions trading scheme. After the vote, the EP rapporteur/draftsman **Claude Turmes** said:

"Today's vote brings us a step closer enacting this essential legislation, which will give a boost to Europe's economy and help achieve our energy security and climate goals. The new energy efficiency directive enshrines the EU's 20% energy savings target in a legal framework and sets out binding measures (1), which will go a significant way towards bridging the current gap the EU is facing with regards to meeting its pledge to reduce energy consumption 20% by 2020. However, clearly more needs to be done to fully close the gap. Realising the EU's energy saving target not only makes sense in terms of meeting our energy security and climate change goals, it also makes broader economic sense, stimulating economic activity and creating millions of jobs, whilst bringing down energy bills for businesses and households, and our dependence on energy imports.

"While the new energy efficiency legislation represents a major step forward for EU climate policy, it has added to the urgent need to address the problems with the misfiring emissions trading scheme. The carbon market is clearly in need of regulative intervention in order to address the oversupply of emissions permits and the resulting excessively low carbon price. While the Commission committed to do this in the context of negotiations on the energy efficiency directive, it must come forward with proposals to address the oversupply of emissions allowances and the unrealistically low carbon price before the summer. As a first step, this means limiting forthcoming auctions of emissions permits. However, ultimately, the Commission will have to completely retire an amount of emissions permits. The sooner this is done, the better."

(1) The legislation includes a number of crucial measures that will deliver concrete energy savings. Member states will have to set out a roadmap for achieving energy savings of 80% in the buildings sector by 2050. Energy companies will also be tasked with delivering 1.5% in annual savings across all end-use sectors, even if this obligation was regrettably watered-down by EU governments. Binding financial instruments and better consumer information (such as through the use of smart meters) are among the other detailed measures included, as are demand response measures that will potentially reduce costs of

balancing energy and reduce energy bills

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Claude Turmes

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