

ITALY
SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, TRADE AND TOURISM

**FINAL DOCUMENT, PUBLISHED PURSUANT TO RULE 127 OF THE RULES OF
PROCEDURE, AND RELATING TO:**

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council
on energy efficiency [COM (2011) 370 final]

Approved on 29 September, 2011

The Economic Activities, Trade and Tourism Committee of Italy's Chamber of Deputies,

having examined the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on energy efficiency COM(2011)370, in accordance with Rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure,

Whereas:

energy efficiency, which is required to achieve energy savings of 20% by 2020, is strategically vital to meeting the objectives of the climate and energy package, which also calls for a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and increasing the share of renewable energy in all energy consumption, also to 20% ;

energy efficiency is of particular importance for Italy in view of the characteristics and propensities of Italian trade and industry and the marked predominance of small and medium-sized enterprises, often in the craft industries, which use exclusively national technologies, whereas energy from renewable sources most often involves the use of technologies of foreign origin;

more generally, energy efficiency offers major potential for economic and industrial development which must be effectively exploited, given the substantial benefits it can provide in terms of job creation, support for research and technological innovation, and GDP growth;

Italy therefore has a particular interest in seeing the European institutions attribute special importance to energy efficiency amongst the objectives of the climate and energy package. Hence it is essential that the Italian Government make every effort to encourage the European institutions to act consistently and decisively to make use of all the energy saving possibilities under a comprehensive and common EU energy strategy, and this requires the interconnectivity of networks

at continental level and incentive policies based on an accurate cost-benefit analysis, taking account of the more substantial advantages afforded by energy efficiency as opposed to renewable sources.

in terms of energy efficiency, Italy can point to its own very positive experience and results superior to those of other partners, which place it in a particularly strong positions;

harmonising and optimising the energy efficiency provisions regime by establishing a consistent and systematic regulatory framework would offer obvious advantages to help meet the objectives and maximise the growth prospects for undertakings in the sector;

national legislation already provides for a number of measures to support energy efficiency, such as a 55% tax deduction on expenditure on upgrading the energy efficiency of building stock and restructuring public buildings;

while it is necessary that such measures be confirmed, the resources may not suffice to ensure that the objectives are met;

in administrative terms, there should be verification of the practicability of requiring each Member State to carry out, within the time limits set, a detailed survey of public buildings, specifying the area in square metres and energy performance of each building;

the financial and administrative sustainability of requiring public bodies to purchase only products, services and buildings with high energy efficiency performance also needs to be carefully assessed;

similarly, there must be an evaluation of the requirements that energy distributors and retail energy sales companies achieve annual energy savings equal to 1.5% of their energy sales and that, by 14 January 2014, Member States establish national plans for developing the potential for the application of high-efficiency generation and efficient district heating and cooling, in order to establish whether these requirements entail excessive costs for the State and public bodies and/or for private undertakings;

the provisions concerning the use of individual meters should also be evaluated, taking account in any case of Italy's particularly highly developed experience in the electricity sector, while also taking account of the technical problems regarding gas and district heating,

gives a positive opinion

while strongly recommending that:

(a) in view of the clear climatic differences between Italy and the northern European countries as well as between regions within Italy, great care should be taken to ensure that the EU's emphasis on supporting and expanding district heating does not become a potential source of damage to or discrimination against our industrial fabric, nor undermine the proper allocation of public resources, which must in any event be based on maximising the cost-effectiveness of the final result;

and making the following comments:

(a) while it is noted that the proposal, quite properly, does not impose specific constraints on the Member States, leaving it to each of them to select the most expedient and appropriate measures to meet the objective of 20% energy savings by 2020, it is nevertheless essential to assess in detail the administrative and financial scope and impact of each of the measures proposed;

(b) in particular, the European institutions should provide for the allocation of resources commensurate with the objective, possibly involving instruments and institutions such as the EIB, to support practical implementation of the proposed Directive;

(c) the measures, including financial measures, to be taken at EU level to ensure that the proposal's objectives are met should first and foremost fully exploit the scope for energy savings already available and as yet untapped in all sectors (households, transport, industry and services). Equally, care should be taken to avoid measures being adopted that are likely to penalise SMEs operating in the sector, with particular reference to those using national technology;

(d) as regards the impact assessment, incentive schemes should be designed on the basis of a systematic cost-benefit analysis which takes account first and foremost of the climatic differences within the EU and between different regions of individual Member States, with particular reference to the positive impact on employment, innovation and tax compliance. However, consideration should be given to whether it might not be preferable to lay down the methodology for the cost-benefit analysis in the Directive itself, rather than in a delegated act, as provided in Article 17;

(e) with all due appreciation for the energy audit requirement, it would perhaps be appropriate to introduce schemes to mitigate the burden this entails for those concerned by introducing provisions allowing the costs to be offset and focusing more on staff training than on the certification of undertakings, where, also in line with the proportionality principle, simpler systems, proportional to the sizes of the undertakings, must be provided for;

(f) in the context of international competition and the economic crisis, it should be emphasised that EU energy labelling should be promoted by introducing the requirement that a certain percentage of the products to be used to achieve the energy savings objectives must bear EU energy labels;

(g) lastly, amongst the policies and instruments to encourage energy saving, particular importance should be attached to adopting measures to promote energy efficiency in the transport sector through the development of electric transport and adjusting the balance between different modes of transport.