

EU Strategy on Heating and Cooling

MEPs' move to empower consumers welcomed by Europe's independent fuel suppliers.

Yesterday, the European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee adopted its report on the EU strategy on heating and cooling, recognising the potential of the modernisation of heating systems. UPEI, the voice of Europe's independent fuel suppliers, has been calling for policy makers to promote modernisation as a key means of improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and today welcomes this important development.

"If the European Union's targets for improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions are to be achieved, we cannot afford to wait. We must start today and encourage the mobilisation of all players on the market, so that the potential contribution of all energy sources can be immediately tapped. With time, we expect to see an increasing market share for renewable energies. However, in the meantime, we must empower the consumer through affordable and realistic solutions" commented UPEI President, Thierry De Meulder.

In this spirit, UPEI has been stressing the important energy and greenhouse gas emissions savings that can be achieved through the replacement of old and inefficient boilers with modern condensing technology. Today, modern oil condensing boilers achieve the same energy efficiency rating as gas condensing boilers and can achieve up to 40% more efficient than old oil boilers.

In a situation where approximately 17% of Europe's households rely on oil heating, and in some countries this figure exceeds 25%, many in remote and rural areas, modernisation is the most affordable and effective measure. Voting for the report, Members of the European Parliament have explicitly recognised the potential of modernisation and the need for sustainable and cost effective solutions, together with the fact that households in remote and isolated regions may require unique solutions. This approach is also compatible with the development of hybrid solutions, combining renewable energies with conventional systems, which would ensure secure energy supplies while addressing the climate and environmental impacts of heating systems.

UPEI also welcomes the call for technology neutrality and the need to give consumers the freedom to choose from a variety of high efficiency and renewable technologies appropriate to their personal needs. Nevertheless, as the report progresses towards the plenary vote after the summer break, it will be important to ensure that technology neutrality, regulatory stability (preventing abrupt market distortions from legislation) and cost effectiveness are considered alongside the equally important need for sustainable solutions. This is particularly important to ensure that ongoing innovation and investment is stimulated and not curbed.

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UPEI represents European importers and wholesale/retail distributors of refined petroleum products and their alternatives, supplying Europe's customers, independently of the major petroleum producers.

Independent suppliers, covering more than a third of Europe's demand, play a crucial role in an evolving market by bringing competition which is vital to the economy. Their independence enables them to respond rapidly to changes in terms of market structure, products and services, contributing to security of supply on a local, regional and national level.

UPEI was created in 1962 with the aim of ensuring a level playing field for the supply of energy on the European market and safeguarding a competitive approach. The organisation brings together national associations and suppliers across Europe.

Today, **UPEI** also acts as an informed and responsible partner to Europe's decision-makers on the risks and opportunities involved in the transition to a genuine European Energy Union.