

Resolution on the challenge of energy efficiency through information and communication technologies

2009/2512(RSP) - 04/02/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 2 February 2009, the European Parliament adopted, by 633 votes to 22 with 4 abstentions, a resolution tabled by the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy on the challenge of energy efficiency through information and communication technologies. It calls on the Commission and Member States to endeavour to increase awareness, for example through demonstration projects, of the importance of ICTs for improving energy efficiency in the EU economy and as driving forces behind increased productivity and growth and cost reductions that make for competitiveness, sustainable development and the improvement of EU citizens' quality of life. It notes that ICTs have a key role to play in improving energy efficiency locally and globally and amongst the industrialised and the emerging economies (in particular by means of intelligent networks and intelligent buildings and the technological upgrading of the production processes of energy-intensive industries), and having regard to the potential for savings offered by intelligent transport systems in the case of manufacturing industry and transport. Parliament suggests that forthcoming Council Presidencies make the topic of ICT and its importance in combating and adapting to climate change one of the priorities for their terms of office.

Those Member States which have not yet devised a green strategy based on the use of ITs/ICTs which is capable of contributing to a progressive reduction in the EU's CO₂ emissions are urged to do so.

Parliament calls on Member States and the Commission, as appropriate, to do the following, *inter alia*:

- harmonise energy efficiency-related criteria, approaches and changes to the law and to adopt an holistic approach, meaning that Member States should not only think of components but of entire systems (for example, smart buildings);
- make further use of "green procurement" in order to encourage the take-up of ICT solutions by their public services, which can set an example in promoting energy-efficient solutions;
- promote the use of financial incentives for smart grid technologies, and encourage the use of the most advanced remote sensing technologies, which will help to reduce energy losses by identifying leakages, blockages or other problems in major energy infrastructures;
- promote the testing, validation, introduction and further dissemination of computer- and ICT-based methods to improve energy efficiency, particularly improved electricity networks, energy-efficient buildings, smart lighting, industrial process automation, virtualisation, dematerialisation and the replacement of physical travel with tele- and videoconferencing, in cooperation with industry, consumers, authorities, universities and research institutions;
- invest substantially in ICT-enabled decentralised energy-production systems (including the use of combined heat and power generation advantageously hybridised with renewables such as solar energy-based technologies, with the emphasis on intelligent solar-tracking technologies, and wind technologies), and to amend Community legislation and Member States' laws accordingly;
- create better conditions for the use of ICTs in energy-intensive industries, and in particular in the construction industry (for example through the deployment of advanced embedded monitoring and control technologies on production lines), since 10% of global CO₂ emissions stem from the manufacture of construction materials.

The Commission is urged to do the following:

- take the lead by developing an action plan to reduce the energy consumption of EU institutions;
- consider including in its Impact Assessment Guidelines an evaluation of potential energy savings through the use of ICT-based solutions;
- stipulate that at least 5% of Structural Fund resources be spent on improving the energy efficiency of existing homes;
- create a more favourable regulatory environment with better access to finance for SMEs that can play a key role in implementing ICT-based solutions for energy efficiency.