

Thursday 25 September 2008

49. Calls for greater transparency with respect to personal data and information on users stored by Internet search engines, email providers and social networking sites;
50. Considers that regulation at EU level sufficiently safeguards the accessibility of electronic programme guides and similar overview and navigation facilities, but that further action could be considered with regard to the way that information about the available programmes is presented to ensure that services of general interest are easily accessible; calls on the Commission to ascertain by means of consultative procedures whether minimal guidelines or sector-specific regulation are needed to safeguard media pluralism;
51. Calls for safeguarding of the balance between public law and private broadcasters, and of the coherent application of competition and media law, to strengthen media pluralism.
52. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

Controlling energy prices

P6_TA(2008)0460

European Parliament resolution of 25 September 2008 on getting a grip on energy prices

(2010/C 8 E/17)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 29 September 2005 on oil dependency⁽¹⁾ and its resolution of 19 June 2008 on the crisis in the fisheries sector caused by rising fuel prices⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication of 13 June 2008 entitled 'Facing the challenge of higher oil prices' (COM(2008)0384),
 - having regard to the Presidency conclusions of the European Council of 19-20 June 2008,
 - having regard to the agreement at the informal Ecofin Council of 12-13 September 2008 in Nice,
 - having regard to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in the summer oil prices reached their all-time highest level in real terms, prices of other energy products have also risen and consumer fuel prices have been following the trend of the crude oil price; whereas the weak US dollar has contributed to pressure on oil prices,
- B. whereas estimates indicate that oil prices may stay high in the medium- to long-term and that this will have a negative impact on inflation and the growth of the EU economy,
- C. whereas the higher energy price levels are undermining the purchasing power of EU citizens, with the most negative impact being on the lowest income households and energy-intensive industry sectors,
- D. whereas the hike in energy prices is influenced by a combination of complex sets of factors: structural shift of oil supply and demand, shrinking number and size of new oilfields; limited oil production expansion; geopolitical factors; less investment in technology advances; higher investment costs; and lack of qualified workforce in the main producing countries; whereas some oil producing countries tend to use their natural resources for political purposes,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 227 E, 21.9.2006, p. 580.

⁽²⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0308.

Thursday 25 September 2008

- E. whereas the increased transparency, reliability and more frequent publication of data on commercial oil stocks are important for the efficient functioning of oil markets,
- F. whereas the current financial turmoil has pushed investors to seek alternative investments and has contributed to increased short-term price volatility,
- G. whereas the EU economy is still highly dependent on imported oil, and potential new fields are mostly in 'unconventional deposits', making investment costs higher for their development,
- H. whereas a common European foreign policy on energy, based on solidarity and diversification of supply, would create synergies ensuring security of supply for the European Union and would enhance the EU's strength, capacity for action in foreign policy matters and credibility as a global actor,
1. Emphasises, that unless there is a global concerted shift in energy policy and consumption, the energy demand will continue to grow in the coming decades; expresses its concern at the increase in energy prices, notably because of its negative effect on the world economy and consumers, which is also hampering the attainment of the Lisbon Strategy objectives;
 2. Underlines the necessity to take measures that will enable the EU economy to maintain its competitiveness and to adapt to the new energy price environment;
 3. Calls for strong political commitment to take concrete measures towards cutting energy demand, to promote renewables and energy efficiency, and to pursue diversification of energy supply and reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels; considers this shift to be the most appropriate response to higher energy prices, to increase stability in the energy markets, to deliver long-term cost benefits to consumers and to meet the objectives of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its related Kyoto Protocol; endorses the need for those strategic measures necessarily to be followed up by commensurate financial resources in R&D;
 4. Considers that short-term and targeted measures should be taken by Member States to alleviate the negative impact on the poorest households; highlights the fact, however, that measures inducing more inflation should be avoided as they can be a detriment to public finance sustainability and neutralised by higher prices of oil;
 5. Reiterates its first-reading position of 18 June 2008 on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2003/54/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity ⁽¹⁾ and of 9 July 2008 on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2003/55/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas ⁽²⁾; considers that the Commission should bring forward a communication on tackling energy poverty in the European Union; calls on Member States to provide national definitions of energy poverty and to develop national action plans to eradicate energy poverty; calls on the Commission to monitor and coordinate the data provided by Member States, in addition to ensuring that universal and public service obligations are respected;
 6. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the proposed Energy Consumers Charter clearly sets out consumers' rights; calls on the national regulatory authorities to use the powers at their disposal to help consumers;

⁽¹⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0294.

⁽²⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0347.

Thursday 25 September 2008

7. Notes the drop in crude oil prices to USD 100 per barrel in the last few weeks, breaking the trend of continuous rising oil prices; notes with concern, however, that consumers are continuing to pay higher energy prices, not always fully reflecting downward fluctuations in crude oil prices; calls on the Commission to monitor price developments, in particular with regard to how price increases or reductions affect consumers;
8. Calls on the Commission to guarantee compliance with existing EU competition rules, with particular focus on investigating and fighting anti-competitive practices in the gas and electricity sectors, as well as in oil refining and distribution to points of consumption;
9. Calls on the Commission to investigate the linkage between oil and gas prices in long-term gas contracts and to produce an adequate policy response;
10. Calls on Ecofin to introduce reduced VAT for energy-saving goods and services;
11. Encourages measures that help the adjustment process of energy-intensive industries and services so that they can be more energy-efficient; asks the Commission, however, to monitor the impact of such measures and to take appropriate action in the event of competition distortion;
12. Stresses, furthermore, that renewable energy sources, combined with energy conservation measures, including incentives to improve household energy efficiency, reduce Europe's dependence on energy imports and thus diminish the political and economic risks resulting from these imports;
13. Calls on the Commission to ensure that energy saving, energy efficiency and renewable energies are prioritised in the design of future EU energy policy, in particular under the forthcoming 2nd Strategic Energy Review;
14. Considers that the European Investment Bank should have a more prominent role in providing funding for energy efficiency, renewables and R&D projects, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises;
15. Notes the increase in tax revenues on energy in some Member States due to recent oil price increases; underlines the importance of adequate fiscal policies, as a means of reducing dependence on fossil fuels, addressing climate change and creating incentives for investments in energy-efficiency, renewable energy and environmentally friendly products;
16. Invites the Commission to present its proposal on review of Council Directive 2003/96/EC of 27 October 2003 restructuring the Community framework for the taxation of energy products and electricity ⁽¹⁾ (the so-called 'Energy Tax Directive'), having carefully examined the effects that taxation measures could have on inflation, new investments, and on the transition to a low-carbon and EU energy-efficient economy;
17. Stresses the importance of the increased transparency and reliability of data on oil markets and oil commercial stocks; considers it important to improve the understanding of oil products price development; calls for a timely revision of the Community legislation on emergency oil stocks;
18. Stresses that the EU should speak with one voice as regards energy policy; reiterates the importance of an EU common energy policy and commitment to the European Neighbourhood Policy; believes in this respect that the EU should take the lead in the energy dialogue with key oil and gas supply countries; welcomes the idea of a high-level summit between oil and gas consuming and producing countries, aimed at greater stability of prices, more predictability in supplies and payment for sales in euros;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 283, 31.10.2003, p. 51.

Thursday 25 September 2008

19. Encourages EU companies to be more proactive, by making further investments, and to take the lead in new technology know-how and engineering skills in order to remain key partners with the main oil producing countries; notes that investments are particularly needed to develop the refining and exploration capabilities in order to cope with increasing demand;
20. Notes that Corporate Social Responsibility should be improved within the major energy companies in order to channel more private investment in the energy industry into energy-saving programmes and alternative energy technologies and related R&D;
21. Invites the Member States to coordinate policy interventions in tackling the increase in energy prices; calls on the Commission to prepare an analysis based on Member States' best practice policy measures in their response to high energy price challenges;
22. Calls on the Council to reach an agreement as soon as possible on the next key steps towards achieving a fully liberalised internal energy market, as this will contribute to reducing EU vulnerability to energy prices and enhance security of supply; reaffirms in this respect its strong support for the completion of the EU internal energy market;
23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

White Paper on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues

P6_TA(2008)0461

European Parliament resolution of 25 September 2008 on the White Paper on nutrition, overweight and obesity-related health issues (2007/2285(INI))

(2010/C 8 E/18)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's White Paper of 30 May 2007 entitled 'A Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues' (COM(2007)0279),
- having regard to its resolution of 1 February 2007 on promoting healthy diets and physical activity ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to the Second World Health Organisation (WHO) European Action Plan for Food and Nutrition Policy 2007-2012, adopted by the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in Belgrade, 17-20 September 2007, and the European Charter on Counteracting Obesity, adopted by the WHO Regional Office in 2006,
- having regard to the objectives set by the WHO European Ministerial Conference held in Istanbul on 15-17 November 2006, with the European Charter on Counteracting Obesity,
- having regard to the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, adopted by the 57th World Health Assembly on 22 May 2004,
- having regard to the conclusions of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council of 2 and 3 June 2005 concerning obesity, nutrition and physical activity,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 250 E, 25.10.2007, p. 93.