Press release | 05.11.2013

Energy subsidies

Oettinger's shameful massaging of figures cannot hide truth on distorting coal and nuclear subsidies

The European Commission is set to present a report today on the situation with regard to public subsidies for energy in Europe. The Greens hit out at the intervention by EU energy commissioner Oettinger to change the Commission's own findings, with a few to masking the level of aid received by nuclear power and fossil fuels (1). Green energy spokesperson **Claude Turmes** commented:

"It is shameful that energy commissioner Oettinger has been allowed to get away with massaging the figures of the European Commission's own findings on state subsidies for energy. Suppressing the findings on the level of distorting subsidies received by fossil fuels and nuclear power should fool nobody however and certainly not be used to guide core EU policy for the energy sector.

"The final draft of the report is notably silent on the dramatic impact of the current low CO2 price in the EU's emissions trading scheme, which has given coal power a renewed unfair advantage. The EU should instead be prioritising measures to ensure a meaningful price for CO2, reflecting the true cost of fossil fuels.

"The report also ignores the unsustainable situation with nuclear power. Two years on from Fukushima, the Commission must finally come forward with proposals to address the scandalous situation around the liability of nuclear reactors. The public cannot continue to foot the bill for nuclear liability and the Commission must stop stalling on EU legislative proposals.

"The Commission's original findings made clear that state subsidies to coal, gas and nuclear power represent the biggest threat to the functioning of the EU energy market. Instead of allowing Oettinger a platform to pursue his personal attacks on the renewable energy sector, the Commission should be looking to Europe's energy future and proposing measures to ensure a properly functioning EU energy market, which promotes sustainable and indigenous renewable energy."

(1) Figures on the amount of state subsidies received by fossil fuel-powered energy and nuclear power included in earlier drafts have been removed. According to the earlier drafts, nuclear energy benefits from €35 billion in annual subsidies, gas and coal power from €66 billion (including social and health costs), and renewable energy from €30 billion. These figures are not included in the final report to be presented today.

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Claude Turmes

Member

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