



Proposal for SAVE II: Increasing energy efficiency and improving environmental protection

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The SAVE II programme is expected to run for five years (1996-2000), with a budget of ECU 150 million. It aims to continue and expand the activities established under the SAVE I programme (Council Decision 91/565/EEC), which will come to an end on 31 December 1995, and also incorporates the Electricity End Use Programme (PACE) and the Regional and Urban Energy Management Action (PERU). All these actions have complementary goals and the SAVE II programme provides a comprehensive framework for undertaking all these related activities.

SAVE II will have the following elements:

- Reinforced existing actions:
 - . Labelling and standardization actions in the area of energy using equipment;
 - . Pilot actions to be carried out by appropriate networks;
 - . Targeted pilot actions;
 - . Dissemination of information.
- New actions:
 - . Monitoring of energy efficiency progress at national and EU level;

- . Specific actions in favour of greater cohesion between Member States in the field of the establishment of policies aimed at efficient energy management;
- . Specific action aimed at improving energy management at regional and urban level;
- . Actions aimed at establishing energy efficiency as a criterion within existing EU strategic programmes.

Commissioner Papoutsis emphasized that the proposal will make a very important contribution not only to the accomplishment of environmental strategy, but will also help to improve and increase the competitiveness of European industry, protect the jobs of those working in this sector, create new jobs and maintain them by providing export markets.

At the recent Climate Change Convention in Berlin, the vital role of energy efficiency in achieving the Union's environmental objectives was stressed. The SAVE programme has, since 1992, been the cornerstone of the Union's CO limitation strategy. Although operating with limited funding, SAVE has made a significant contribution to the rational use of energy in the European Union.

Furthermore, energy is a cost factor for the European industry. While industry is very conscious of the need to keep energy prices low, it should also be aware that a prudent use of energy can lead to substantial gains in competitiveness. SAVE II will attempt to harness these energy efficiency gains which can be substantial, thereby increasing industrial competitiveness.

There is also evidence to prove that energy investment in demand reduction creates jobs in numbers much higher than those generated by investments on the supply side. Energy efficiency could therefore be an important new generator of jobs and could maintain employment by providing future export markets for European energy service expertise.

Another important element of SAVE II is the emphasis on its contribution to economic and social cohesion within the Union. Many of the disadvantaged regions suffer from a profligate use of energy. It has been established that the monetary savings derived from energy efficiency tend to circulate within the local economy and can act as an engine for local development. This is particularly important in the public sector, where the saving on energy efficiency can be immediately translated into improved services for the citizens or reduction in tax requirements.

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