

## **EU adopts new rules to strengthen energy market**

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs have welcomed the adoption of new rules on the internal energy market by the European Council following a positive vote by the European Parliament in April. The new legislation is expected to strengthen the EU's internal energy market, give consumers more protection and the benefit of the lowest possible energy prices while offering companies the chance to compete on a level playing field. In addition the legislative package will promote sustainability by stimulating energy efficiency. Member States now have 18 months to transpose the new rules into national law. "This is a major step towards a truly integrated European energy market, and the right European Union response to the structural challenges we face. It is good news for business and citizens alike who need competitive prices and security of energy supply. The adoption of the internal market rules shows that Europe can deliver on its promises," says Commission President José Manuel Barroso. "It is now up to the Member States to put these new rules into practice and give a better deal to both consumers and businesses. Consumers will benefit from better protection and the lowest possible prices, while companies will have a chance to gain more business in a competitive market. The new rules will also take us a big step forward towards meeting the challenges of climate change, increased energy import dependence and global competitiveness," says Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs. The main objective of the legislative package is to put in place the regulatory framework needed to make market opening fully effective.

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