

## EFIEES' ANSWER TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON CITIZENS ENERGY PACKAGE

*EFIEES is the voice of private energy service companies (ESCOs) and their national associations across Europe. Our members represent over 100.000 professionals committed to the design and implementation of energy efficiency measures in public and private buildings, industrial facilities, as well as to the efficient operation of district heating & cooling networks.*

EFIEES welcomes the European Commission's intention to strengthen the participation of citizens in the energy transition and tackle energy poverty with a Citizens Energy Package. The European Union's **path towards climate neutrality and the implementation of the Fit for 55 package indeed require a continuous focus on just transition and energy poverty.**

Some challenges related to the protection of vulnerable households from the energy crisis and from likely consequences of the EU new energy policies have already been identified and planned when working on the updated 2030 objectives, notably with some mechanisms already put in place like the Social Climate Fund. Yet, this alone will not allow to **fully engage citizens as key actors of the energy transition.** In the coming months and years, it will be even more important than before to **work on citizens and users' behaviour, to maximise energy efficiency** across the whole value chain and ensure a just transition. This can notably be achieved by further supporting energy management solutions such as energy performance contracts, that are applicable to a wide range of buildings like large residential buildings including social housing, hospitals, schools, and sports facilities. These solutions indeed often include an **energy coaching component** where ESCO experts help raise awareness among users about energy consumption behaviours, thus truly integrating European citizens in the energy transition efforts.

Furthermore, energy efficiency upgrades can serve as a real economic buffer during energy crises. By improving a building's insulation and enhancing the overall efficiency of its energy systems, households become less vulnerable to energy price volatility. This not only **strengthens their economic resilience but also reduces reliance on (potentially imported) fossil fuels** thus protecting them against shortage and price shocks. Moreover, with the entry into force of the ETS2, Energy (and Carbon) Performance Contracts will be even more useful on helping avoid CO2 related costs by reducing energy consumption and facilitating switch to renewables. In the housing sector for big condominiums and social housing buildings, energy efficiency and more specifically energy management solutions such as Energy Performance Contracting can help containing households' energy consumption and contribute to a greater economic stability. In that sense, the EU needs to **foster and implement large-scale energy**

**efficiency programmes** to achieve significant reductions in energy costs. This dovetails with a need for continuous public support to staged (deep) renovations. By consuming less energy, citizens pay less, generating a dual benefit of economic savings and environmental impact.

**The Citizens Energy Package should therefore not overlook energy efficiency** and solutions such as energy performance contracts, which can both foster citizens' active participation in the energy transition and provide greater protection for vulnerable households against energy costs fluctuations.