

PRESS RELEASE

Federal levy: lower tariff hides higher costs ...

Brussels, 3 January 2013. The Belgian energy regulator CREG has published today the tariffs of the federal levies on electricity and natural gas in 2013. Both tariffs are cut down again, but Febeliec, the federation of the industrial consumers of electricity and natural gas, regrets that this does not lead to lower costs for all users. Moreover, the tariffs for the cost of the offshore wind farms have not been published yet and energy costs in Belgium remain a major threat for our industry's competitiveness.

For electricity, the base tariff for the federal levy is cut down from 3,8597 to 2,9781€/MWh, as such a positive evolution. Nevertheless, it hides a substantial cost increase for all consumers that benefited until now from the exemption from the levies for the Kyoto Fund and the denuclearization Fund. These exemptions were in fact canceled on 1/1/2013. Especially medium consumers will therefore have to undergo a substantial increase of their electricity bill.

Moreover, it is still unknown how the cost for the financing of the offshore wind farms will evolve in 2013. Additional generation capacity has been commissioned, which will lead to an expected cost increase to more than 2€/MWh, over 50% higher than last year. These costs are charged through in a linear way, which will lead to annual cost increases of several thousands or even hundreds of thousands of euros for industrial consumers.

For natural gas, the federal levy and the surcharge for protected clients are cut further down in 2013 to 0,4774€/MWh (compared to 0,6484€ since 1/4/2012). This implies a significant decrease of surcharges on natural gas for all consumers. Gas intensive applications remain nevertheless confronted with a competitive handicap compared to neighboring countries, where these applications are either exempted or benefit from strongly reduced tariffs.

Febeliec appreciates the efforts of the federal authorities to control and possibly reduce surcharges on electricity and natural gas, but insists on the need for fundamental reforms in order to bring these charges in line with our neighboring countries, a vital action in view of preserving our industry.

Contact: Peter Claes, Tel +32 496 59 36 20, febeliec@febeliec.be