

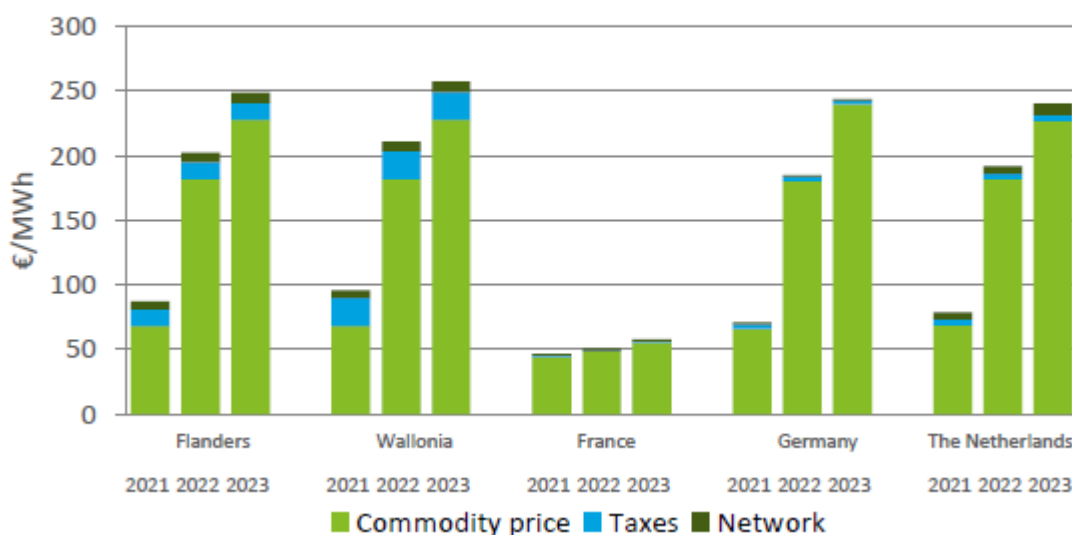
## PRESS RELEASE

### Belgium stays behind: neighboring countries protect companies against new electricity price increases

**Brussels, 28 of March, 2023 – Belgian companies have to face, once again in 2023, significantly higher electricity prices than their competitors in the neighboring countries. Companies with a baseload consumption profile pay this year 18 to 23% more for their power than the Central Western European (CWE) average. Moreover our companies risk to feel the full impact of a possible new price increase in Europe, unlike their German and French competitors, which are protected by strong support measures.**

As every year since 2013, Deloitte has for the account of Febeliec carried out a benchmarking study on the electricity prices for companies in CWE. The study shows that Belgian baseload consumers once again pay 18 to 23% more for their purchased electricity than the zone average. The high forward prices of 2022 lead the average 2023 electricity prices to further increase, in spite of the fast decrease of the spot prices since last summer. French industry continues to benefit from the regulated ARENH tariff for its baseload consumption, providing it with a substantial advantage compared to its neighbor countries. Since this year, Germany too has introduced a mechanism (*Strompreisbremse*) protecting its companies against possible new price increases of gas and electricity in the coming months. This makes Belgian industry highly vulnerable.

### All-in electricity prices for baseload profiles (100 GWh)



The analysis by Deloitte has also pointed out that transmission grid costs are still substantially higher for Belgian baseload consumers, as in all our neighbor countries reductions of up to 90% are granted to companies contributing by their consumption profile to grid stability. It is unclear why these reductions are still not applied in our country. Taxes on electricity consumption from their side have hardly decreased in Belgium in 2023, contrarily to our neighbor countries. Here too the hidden tax bill in the electricity invoice continues to weigh heavily on our companies' competitiveness.

On top of their competitive disadvantage compared to their competitors in the neighboring countries, Belgian companies also have to face substantially lower energy costs in large parts of the rest of the world (North and South America, Middle East, Australia, ...). This structural handicap seriously jeopardizes industrial activity and its further development in Belgium and in Europe.

Febeliec welcomes the introduction of the energy norm at federal level in Belgium, and insists on a rapid transposition in the regions and an effective application in practice. Moreover Febeliec calls upon federal and regional authorities to swiftly take all possible measures aiming at restoring our industry's competitiveness, including a reduction of surcharges on electricity consumption and the introduction of a reduction of transmission grid costs for baseload consumers. On top of that specific measures need to be taken urgently to support industry against the consequences of higher energy prices.

Contact: Thérèse van Bellinghen (Op de Beeck & Partners) - 0475/47.82.33 - [therese@opdebeeck-partners.be](mailto:therese@opdebeeck-partners.be)