

Charging stations at retailers' car parks: only when and where it makes sense

Today the Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee of the European Parliament is voting on the provisional agreement on a revised Directive for Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD). The Directive aims to encourage energy efficiency and increase energy savings in the building sector. A new feature compared to the existing EPBD is that the revised Directive promotes electro-mobility by setting minimum requirements to roll out recharging points for electric cars.

The provisional agreement includes a new requirement that, for new and major renovated buildings with more than 10 parking spaces, at least one charging station has to be installed and 20% of the parking lots have to be pre-tubed. This requirement will enter into force from day one of the implementation of the revised Directive in late 2019 or early 2020. Another provision requires that from 2025, Member States have to set requirements for a minimum number of charging stations in all existing non-residential buildings with more than 20 parking spaces.

Retailers and wholesalers are already installing charging stations and support the transition towards electrical cars, but they have to decide when and where the installation of a charging station is useful. Christian Verschueren, Director-General at EuroCommerce, said:

“Without a legal obligation, retailers and wholesalers have already invested in infrastructure providing recharging points for electric cars when they think their customers benefit from these installations. We think that the requirement to install one charging station, as in the provisional text, is an improvement from the original Commission proposal to install charging stations for 10% of all parking spaces. Also, the provision to leave countries with after 2025 to take more precise decisions on e-mobility infrastructure makes sense. That way, the infrastructure will fit the real needs of this rapidly evolving field.”

Verschueren added: *“We welcome these positive aspects of the agreement, and in particular the exemptions made for SMEs and the constructions that are already planned. We ask that the Parliament and the Council adopts this reasonable compromise. We need EU policies that support the transition towards electric mobility, as long as they strike a fair balance of responsibility between all actors, respect rational business decisions, and are not harmful to SMEs.”*

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EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 31 countries and 5.4 million companies, both leading multinational retailers such as Carrefour, Ikea, Metro and Tesco, and many small family operations. Retail and wholesale provide a link between producers and 500 million European consumers over a billion times a day. It generates 1 in 7 jobs, providing a varied career for 29 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. EuroCommerce is the recognised European social partner for the retail and wholesale sector.