

EXPRESS #3

Small is beautiful: decentralised energy providers balk at becoming balancing responsible

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Small is beautiful

SolarPower Europe, along with a number of other trade associations, on 9 November launched the “[Small Is Beautiful](#)” campaign. It is aimed at “*highlighting the benefits of small-scale, clean and locally owned installations to move progressively towards a decentralised energy system.*”

The biggest priority of the campaign, which is also supported by **Cogen Europe, Wind Europe, AEBIOM, Ocean Energy Europe, the European Heat Pump Association** and the **European Biogas Association** (among others), is to ensure that decentralised energy providers will not be made responsible for “**balancing**” and that they will not lose other advantages they currently have in the electricity market.

James Watson, CEO of SolarPower Europe said: “*Small installations empower territories, small businesses, and consumers. When it comes to solar, they are also the biggest job providers. We must reflect on the energy*

*transition we want to see emerging in Europe.” He adds that “These benefits are, however, threatened by the **European Parliament’s** current proposal requiring all power generators to be ‘balancing responsible’ and the blanket removal of *priority dispatch*.”*

The proposal is part of the [response](#) of the important ITRE committee in the European Parliament to the European Commission’s **Clean Energy Package** (CEP), in particular the **Electricity Market Design** regulation.

Small-scale renewable and high efficiency cogeneration installations are generally run by private consumers, households, communities, farmers, cooperatives or SMEs and benefit the local economy, notes the campaign. *“However, European power markets are mostly not yet fit for small installations. Removing the balancing responsibility exemptions and priority dispatch will result in disproportionate costs and technical and administrative burdens.”*

“Keeping the priority dispatch and access regimes for small installations as proposed by the European Commission is fundamental for empowering energy consumers and boosting investments in local sustainable and efficient energy solutions”, indicated Hans Korteweg, Managing Director of COGEN Europe.

In short, what sounds like a sympathetic idea, a “Small is Beautiful” movement, is in fact, an ordinary, if cleverly named, Brussels lobbying initiative.