European energy policy is a major factor in helping to revive European integration as part of an agenda that promotes tangible projects and wellbeing for the people of Europe.

In a context of securing greater coordination of national policies at European level, as advocated through the European Energy Community (EEC), the tools and mechanisms for giving civil society an effective role in policy-making must be put in place.

More specifically, the EESC and Notre Europe – Jacques Delors Institute propose to make a qualitative leap by establishing a European Energy Dialogue (EED) that is open, transparent, coordinated and recognised, both within the Member States and among them. The EESC and Notre Europe – Jacques Delors Institute recommend implementing in the medium term the following three initiatives:

- Launching a large-scale effort to inform and raise the awareness of civil society on energy-related issues. Boosting public involvement in society choices on matters as crucial as energy requires a structured and on-going effort to inform people and raise awareness of the related political, economic, industrial and environmental issues. What we are calling for is active citizenship that is concerned about our future in the medium term.

- Moving beyond the Green Paper A 2030 framework for climate and energy policies, strengthening the EU's existing consultation processes upstream of legislative and regulatory proposals and promoting public debates on the future of energy in all EU Member States. These debates – such as the one currently taking place in France – must be open and designed to feed into political decisions, while reflecting a European and long term perspective.
Ensuring that the opinions of the communities that are consulted are taken into account and respected following local, national and European-level consultations. The EESC and Notre Europe – Jacques Delors Institute wish to engage in a process of monitoring respect for these public opinions. We call on everyone to think not only of their rights but also of their duties, as consumers, as producers and as active members of economic and social democracy.

Energy is a common European good. The governance of European energy strategies must incorporate societal challenges and fully involve the public and the various players involved in the process of developing a new European energy policy for 2030. This will be central to their effectiveness and their success.

The EESC and Notre Europe – Jacques Delors Institute call on the European Council to support the implementation of these initiatives that promote EU efforts to anticipate society's debates on Europe's energy transition. A decision to this effect would send European civil society a positive and necessary signal, emphasising the importance that the European Union attaches to its people a year away from the 2014 European elections.

Jacques Delors
Founding President
Notre Europe-Jacques Delors Institute

Henri Malosse
President
European Economic and Social Committee