



Lighting: A critical, yet overlooked, technology in the EU green transition

As Europe charts its path toward a greener and more competitive future, the energy efficiency ecosystem stands at the heart of sustainable growth. It drives innovation, manufacturing, and job creation within Europe while providing ready-to-deploy solutions that cut energy costs, reduce emissions, and boost energy security.

Too often, lighting is seen as a simple utility - something we turn on without a second thought. But lighting is far more than that. Lighting, when done right, has the power to improve life for everyone, everywhere by enabling sight, comfort, wellbeing, beauty, health, and safety and to transform indoor and outdoor environments. It is also a cornerstone of energy efficiency and should be better recognised as such in EU legislation.

Lighting in Europe: a high-impact, innovation-driven industry ready to deliver.

Though a single light source uses relatively little energy, the sheer number of lighting products installed globally makes lighting **the third-largest energy user globally**, accounting for 12% to 20% of global electricity use. In Europe, lighting alone accounts for around 12% of household electricity use.¹ The good news? **Efficient and intelligent lighting systems already exist.** They offer cost-effective, immediate solutions to reduce energy consumption and cut CO₂ emissions.

¹ See the results of the Project Odyssey-Mure [available here](#).

Many assume the transition to LED lighting is complete, but Europe is only halfway there. Going beyond LEDs, adding sensors and controls can yield up to 80% energy savings compared to conventional lighting².

Additionally, the European lighting industry **holds significant industrial value that should not be underestimated**, as evidenced by the following key figures:

- The European lighting market exceeds **€20 billion in annual value**³, with LightingEurope's members alone generating approximately €15 billion in turnover.
- The sector sustains around **120,000 jobs across Europe**⁴, encompassing the entire value chain - including distribution channels.
- Between 2021 and 2022, **more than 600 new intellectual property patents were registered in the EU lighting market**⁵, reflecting a dynamic and innovation-driven ecosystem.
- The industry maintains **a strong physical presence in Europe**, with the majority of research and innovation activities taking place on the continent.
- **LightingEurope's member companies alone operate 38 production sites, 39 research and development facilities, and 102 administrative offices across Europe.** These figures grow even further when including the many SMEs (more than 1000 companies) represented by our national associations and active throughout the continent.

Making lighting count: a call for inclusion in key EU strategies and legislation.

Despite its potential, lighting is almost absent from the recent key EU strategies - the Clean Industrial Deal and the Action Plan for Affordable Energy - and risks remaining absent in the upcoming legislative proposals.

To fully harness the potential of lighting, we need:

- **the clear political recognition of lighting as an essential technology for the green transition across all industrial and energy policies.**
- **the ambitious implementation at the national level of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)**, including the provision mandating the use of automatic lighting control systems in non-residential buildings. Building renovation cannot be neglected. It is a central part of Europe's decarbonisation strategy.
- EU legislation on the built environment and building renovations, if reviewed, to always **include clear requirements for high indoor environmental quality (IEQ)**, including better lighting (e.g EPBD and Workplaces Directive).
- **the introduction**, in the current EU legislative framework, of a **harmonised set of rules** regarding **light at night**, aiming to replace fragmented national regulations, support the implementation of quality outdoor lighting, and address any potential adverse effects on the environment.
- to advocate for **public procurement to move beyond the 'lowest price wins'** approach and instead prioritise performance, quality, and sustainability in the expected review of the Public Procurement Directive.

² <https://www.signify.com/global/our-company/blog/sustainability/green-switch-the-time-to-act-on-energy-efficiency-is-now>

³ CSIL, The European Market for Lighting Fixtures, 2023.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

- **to ensure that lighting is enabled to access the support mechanisms** outlined in the Clean Industrial Deal and the Affordable Energy Action Plan, as well as the financial resources of the upcoming **Multiannual Financial Framework**.
- to **simplify and clarify current Ecodesign and labelling rules** that apply to lighting products, to foster compliance by suppliers and enforcement by Market Surveillance Authorities.
- **to include controllable LED-based luminaire manufacturing in the EU Taxonomy's Climate Delegated Act** to ensure clarity and equal access to sustainable finance opportunities for all European lighting manufacturers, fostering a level playing field within the industry.
- the **Circular Economy Act and the revised legislation on Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)** to consider the durability and specificities of lighting products.
- **a sectorial and pragmatic approach to lighting when defining restrictions on PFAS usage.**
- **to ensure that there is always an EU-based economic operator that can be held accountable for product compliance** in any relevant piece of legislation subject to review. Non-compliant products sold online are flooding the EU market, harming both consumers and businesses.
- **to address**, in the expected review of the **Regulation (EU) 1025/2012** on European Standardisation, **the issues stemming from its implementation (slow development, lack of harmonisation, lack of certainty for EU manufacturers), while maintaining the current consensus-based and multi-stakeholder engagement system**, as harmonised standards are key to ensure the competitiveness of EU manufacturers.
- **the strong enforcement of existing EU rules by national authorities with the support of the European Commission.** Robust oversight is essential to protect consumers, ensure fairness, and uphold the EU's sustainability goals.

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About LightingEurope

LightingEurope is the voice of the lighting industry, based in Brussels and representing 32 companies and national associations. Together these members account for over 1,000 European companies, the majority of which are small or medium-sized. They represent a total European workforce of over 80,000 people and an annual turnover exceeding 15 billion euro. LightingEurope is committed to promoting efficient lighting that benefits human comfort, safety and wellbeing, and the environment. LightingEurope advocates a positive business and regulatory environment to foster fair competition and growth for the European lighting industry. More information is available at www.lightingeurope.org.