

## **Bulgaria: Export oriented production companies energy consumers complain at announced electricity price hike**

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Big companies insisted on limiting the “social duty” surcharge increase as low as possible after July 1. This was stated in an open letter by the BFIEC (Bulgarian Federation of Industrial Energy Consumers) to the ministers of energy, economy and finance, as well as to the chair of EWRC (Energy and Water Regulatory Commission).

According to industrial consumers raising the surcharge even by BGN 1 could erase whole industries in Bulgaria. From BFIEC remind that the present 9.66 eur/MWh is burdening enough for the business. The energy watchdog plans to raise the surcharge for the business to 20.56 eur/MWh as of July 1.

The drastic increase will be most sensed by the consumers buying electricity on the free market. Those are around 4,500 Bulgarian companies, mostly export-oriented. All of them will have to make over BGN 250 M extra costs in total per year.

BFIEC adds that Bulgarian companies buy more expensive electricity than their rivals in several other EU states. Green energy costs have been capped for years. Romania introduced a relief last year, which would spare basic Romanian industries some EUR 75 M a year, industrial energy consumers explain.

BFIEC reminds gas prices in Bulgaria are the highest in the EU. Thus the organization insists on new energy reliefs for the business as of July 1.

Negative effects on the Bulgarian economy and energy sector are further enhanced by exempting electricity exports from the “social duty” surcharge, BFIEC states.