Implementation of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive

2021/2077(INI) - 15/12/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 526 votes to 109, with 62 abstentions, a resolution on the implementation of the energy performance of buildings Directive.

Buildings are responsible for 36% of total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The building renovation sector is one of the key areas for reducing GHGs and reaching the EU’s climate neutrality, energy efficiency and European Green Deal objectives.

The building renovation rate is currently very low at around 1 % per year, with the rate of deep renovations at 0.2 % per year. Renovation programmes do not always cover the improvement of energy efficiency and the increase of renewable energy sources.

Strengthening the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive

Parliament stressed that the provisions of Article 2a of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (long-term renovation strategies) will need to be strengthened and effectively implemented in order to ensure that the construction sector successfully contributes to the reduction of at least 55% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and to the EU's climate neutrality objective by 2050 at latest. The main objective of the Directive, its intermediate milestones and indicators will also have to be adapted accordingly.

Members regretted that the level of ambition varies from one long-term renovation strategy to another and that several Member States have not set clear milestones for 2030, 2040 and 2050 and have not provided data on GHG emission reductions.

Parliament called on Member States to encourage renovations that promote the **integration of renewable energy** into buildings' energy systems, such as the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, thermal storage and connection to smart grids. It encouraged the use of sustainable, innovative and non-toxic construction materials and stressed the importance of **strengthening the circularity of building materials** through the implementation or creation of a circular economy labelling scheme.

Members recognised that staged and deep renovations in stages can enable less disruptive and more cost-effective renovation measures by aligning them with given 'trigger levels'.

The resolution stressed that renovations and standards for new builds should take into account fire safety and risks related to intense seismic activity and include high health standards. It reaffirmed the need to remove asbestos-containing products and to protect buildings from asbestos emissions into the environment when they are modernised.

Members stressed the importance of clear and accurate information on energy performance and costs for potential buyers and tenants, recognising the need for better and more harmonised **energy performance certificates** in all Member States. They recalled that long-term renovation strategies should include the wider benefits of renovations, such as health, safety, thermal comfort and indoor air quality.

Recommendations

Members called on the Commission to:

- **continue to monitor the implementation** of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive by Member States, in particular with regard to social housing stock, and if necessary take action in case of non-compliance;

- consider how to formulate a **standard template** that Member States could use to ensure that they meet all the requirements of Article 2a of the Directive and harmonise goals and requirements to allow for better comparability of progress and results;

- consider how to further facilitate the development of **one-stop shops** that provide advisory services to citizens and other stakeholders (including technical assistance, information campaigns, training and project funding);

- link long-term renovation strategies with the relevant provisions of the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive on **efficient district heating and cooling** and on the promotion of renewable energy in the building sector, such as solar, thermal and geothermal energy, as well as a greater role for energy storage and self-consumption;

- consider extending the scope of mobility in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive by introducing, where possible, minimum requirements for **bicycle parking facilities and electric bicycle charging points** for different types of buildings.

Highlighting the benefits of the digitalisation of building and construction technologies, the resolution encouraged the use and deployment of emerging technologies, such as smart meters, smart charging, smart heaters, storage technologies and grid-interoperable energy management systems, as well as three-dimensional modelling and simulation and artificial intelligence, to boost carbon emission reductions at every stage of a building's lifecycle.

Member States are encouraged to:

- maximise synergies between their long-term renovation strategies, their national recovery and resilience plans and other recovery measures, thus ensuring that **NextGenerationEU** provides both immediate funding for deep and staged renovations, as well as phased funding, with a particular focus on the worst performing buildings and low-income households

- create a **more stable environment** for investors, developers, landlords and tenants, by improving access to financial and fiscal mechanisms to support the mobilisation of private investment;

- target the **decarbonisation of heating and cooling in buildings** and consider incentive schemes, with a focus on the most vulnerable consumers, to replace old, fossil fuel-based and inefficient heating systems in buildings.