Renewable Energy, Energy Performance of Buildings and Energy Efficiency Directives: amendments (REPowerEU)

2022/0160(COD) - 18/05/2022 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to accelerate energy efficiency and the deployment of renewable energies throughout the Union and thus ensure the achievement of the Union's ambitious climate and energy objectives by 2030 and the objective of climate neutrality by 2050.

PROPOSED ACT: Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the current international tensions arising from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the general geopolitical context and very high energy prices have exacerbated the **need to accelerate energy efficiency and the deployment of renewable energies** in the Union in order to have an energy system that is more independent from third countries. The Union's energy efficiency and renewable energy targets should take into account the urgent need to accelerate energy efficiency and renewable energy deployment and should therefore be increased.

In addition, considering that buildings account for 40% of energy consumed and 36% of energy-related direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions, it is necessary to increase the deployment of solar installations on buildings.

Furthermore, **lengthy and complex administrative procedures** have been identified as one of the key obstacles for investments in renewables and related infrastructure. Conflicting public goods are the second main source of obstacles for the deployment of renewable installations. This is particularly the case for wind power, geothermal power and hydropower as well as solar photovoltaics.

Further obstacles identified in the study relate to the lack of support from policy decisionmakers or protracted opposition from public or private institutions or the public itself as well as problems related to grid connections and operation procedures.

As a result of these barriers, the lead time for renewable energy projects can take up to ten years. A precondition for the acceleration of renewable energy projects to materialise is therefore to simplify and shorten permitting, as set out in the REPower EU Communication issued in the wake of recent geopolitical events.

CONTENT: this proposal is a Directive amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, increasing the Union's renewable energy target for 2030 and strengthening the **permitting provisions** of that Directive.

More specifically, the proposal:

- increases the Union's renewable energy target to **45%**;

- requires Member States to promote the testing of new renewable energy technologies while applying appropriate safeguards;

- introduces an obligation for Member States to **identify the land and sea areas** necessary for the installation of plants for the production of energy from renewable sources in order to meet their national contributions towards the 2030 renewable energy target;

- obliges Member States to adopt a plan or plans designating ‘renewables go-to areas’, which are particularly suitable areas for the installation of production of energy from renewable sources;

- **extends the scope of the permit-granting process**, clarifying the start of the permit-granting process and asking for the most expeditious administrative and judicial procedures available for appeals in the context of an application for a renewable energy projects;

- regulates the permit-granting process in renewables go-to areas;

- regulates the permit-granting process for the installation of solar energy equipment in artificial structures;

- ensures that plants for the production of energy from renewable sources, their connection to the grid, the related grid itself or storage assets are presumed to be of overriding public interest for specific purposes.

The proposal also amends Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings by obliging Member States to **ensure that new buildings are solar ready and to install solar energy installations** on buildings (i) no later than 31 December 2026, on all new public and commercial buildings with a usable floor area of more than 250 square metres; (ii) no later than 31 December 2027, on all existing public and commercial buildings with a usable floor area of more than 250 square metres; and (iii) no later than 31 December 2029, on all new residential buildings.

Lastly, the proposal amends the Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU, **raising the Union's energy efficiency target for 2030**. Member States should collectively ensure that energy consumption is reduced by at least 13% in 2030 compared to the 2020 baseline projections, so that the Union's final energy consumption does not exceed 750 Mtoe and the Union's primary energy consumption does not exceed 980 Mtoe in 2030.