

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 27th June 2017

How Low Can You Go? EU Member States Fall Short on Own Commitments Again

On 26th June, EU energy ministers agreed on a *General Approach* for the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED). The widely feared watering down of the original proposals has happened with ministers backing down from any further ambition for energy efficiency and buildings. EU Member States have now failed to put in place the legal framework to support their existing commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement and have reneged on their responsibility to take a global leadership position.

EuroACE, representing leading providers of energy efficient products, equipment and services, laments this outcome. Therefore, we will continue to work closely with the European Parliament to ensure that its position will be strong enough to get final directives that reflect the level of ambition needed for the EU to be a clean energy leader.

Making significant improvements in energy efficiency across all sectors of our economies is key to achieving a low carbon economy in a cost-effective way and doing so will boost jobs and economic growth. A high energy efficiency target also increases energy security and eases the effort needed to achieve targets for renewable energy.

Although Member States confirmed the 30% energy efficiency headline target for 2030, they postponed a decision on whether to make it binding. Further on, the Council significantly diluted the energy saving obligation requirements set out in Article 7, creating significant uncertainty for businesses and investors in energy efficiency. In reality, this result makes investment in energy efficiency, and the energy transition in general, more expensive.

EuroACE particularly regrets the deletion of the 2050 perspective from Article 7, coming at a time when national renovation strategies are expected to lead to a transformation of the building stock over the long-term and thus support the overall energy transition in society. *“Member States have established a risky position in relation to 2050 goals, deleting the reference in the EED at a time when the EPBD finally starts addressing the long-term renovation challenge that is facing the EU”* said Adrian Joyce, EuroACE Secretary General *“This contradictory stance sends confusing signals to the market at a time when it needs clear, unambiguous policy to boost confidence and investments”* he added.

The Council’s position on the EPBD cuts off huge energy savings potentials that lie in buildings. The requirements for long-term renovation strategies means that they will remain largely a paper exercise. Summing up the disappointment felt within EuroACE, Adrian Joyce said: *“It’s as if the EU Member States challenged themselves to find out how low they could go in relation to ambition on energy efficiency. We now face the prospect of seeing a rolling back of investments in energy efficiency with all the losses in terms of multiple benefits that that entails.”*

Highly energy efficient and smart buildings can deliver affordable energy and comfort for citizens as well as driving innovation and ensuring competitiveness for EU businesses. The text of the General Agreement on the EPBD contains little that will boost the rate and depth of renovation. Additionally, provisions such as the introduction of *adequate information* as an alternative to inspections of buildings open the door for Member States to simply do nothing to improve the energy performance of buildings.

EuroACE acknowledges that several Member States (FR, DE, SE, IE and LU) see the need to grasp the opportunity of revising ambition upwards in the EPBD and in the EED and they did speak up during the long negotiations ahead of the adoption of the General Agreement, although they did not win the day.

EuroACE urges the incoming Estonian Presidency to work with Member States to recognise that the momentum in international climate politics exists now and must be grasped, particularly as favourable economic conditions prevail. The EU will only lead by adopting an ambitious regulatory framework on energy and climate, showing by its example that there is a way forward to a better, sustainable and low-carbon future.

EuroACE now looks to the European Parliament and calls on MEPs to adopt positions on the EPBD and the EED that does justice to Europe's international commitment and its ambition to create an innovative low-carbon economy.

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For further information

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About EuroACE

EuroACE represents Europe's leading companies involved with the manufacture, distribution and installation of energy saving goods and services for buildings. EuroACE members employ over 280.000 people in these activities in Europe, and have around 900 production facilities and office locations. The mission of EuroACE is to work together with the EU institutions to help Europe move towards a more efficient use of energy in buildings, thereby contributing to Europe's commitments on climate change, energy security and economic growth.

EuroACE Members (June 2017) are

