

Energy performance of buildings. Recast

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The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report drawn up by Silvia-Adriana ICAU (PES, RO) amending, under the first reading of codecision procedure, the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the energy performance of buildings (recast).

The main amendments are as follows:

Subject matter: the subject matter of the Directive should include a reference to the cost-optimal calculation methodology, as well as to minimum performance requirements for building components and technical building systems, and to their application in new and existing buildings. Targets for net zero energy buildings are an important element of the recast. Education, training and mutual recognition requirements between Member States for certifiers of the energy performance of buildings and for inspectors of heating and air-conditioning systems should be included.

Member States should establish national plans for eliminating obstacles under building, tenancy and heritage protection laws and for creating financial incentives.

Definitions: the committee inserted definitions for "new building", "parts of a building", "net zero energy building", "energy from renewable sources", "building component", "energy poverty". It amended the definition for "major renovation".

Adoption of methodology: rather than Member States, the text states that the Commission shall, after consulting the relevant stakeholders and in particular representatives from local, regional and national authorities, establish by 31 March 2010 a common methodology of calculation of the energy performance of buildings, in accordance with the general framework set out in Annex I. The energy performance of buildings shall be expressed in a transparent manner and shall include an indicator for CO₂ emissions and for primary energy demand.

Setting minimum energy performance requirements: as from 30 June 2012 Member States shall only provide incentives for the construction or major renovation of buildings or parts thereof, including building components, the results of which comply at least with minimum energy performance requirements achieving the results of the calculation referred to in the text.

Calculation of cost-optimal levels of minimum energy performance requirements: a new Annex is inserted listing the principles for a common methodology on calculating cost-optimal levels. This common methodology may refer to relevant European standards and shall, inter alia, set out common assumptions or calculation methods for energy costs.

Technical building systems: smart meters must be installed in all new buildings and all buildings undergoing a major renovation and whenever a meter is replaced, and shall encourage the installation of active control systems such as automation, control and monitoring systems, where appropriate.

Net zero energy buildings: this article replaces the article entitled "Buildings of which both carbon dioxide emissions and primary energy consumption are low or equal to zero." The committee stipulates that Member States shall ensure that all new buildings are at least net zero energy buildings by 31 December 2018 at the latest. Member States shall set targets for the minimum percentage of buildings which shall be, by 2015 and by 2020 respectively, net zero energy buildings. The Commission shall establish a detailed common definition of net zero energy buildings by 31 December 2010 at the latest.

Financial Incentives and Market Barriers: a new clause states that Member States shall, by 30 June 2011, draw up national action plans, including proposed measures, for meeting the requirements laid down in the Directive through reducing existing legal and market barriers and developing existing and new financial and fiscal instruments to increase the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings.

Member States must compare their financial and fiscal instruments with the instruments listed in a new Annex IIIb and, without prejudice to national legislation, implement at least two measures from that Annex.

The Commission shall, by 30 June 2010 at the latest, following an impact assessment, bring forward appropriate legislative proposals to strengthen existing and propose additional Community financial instruments to support the implementation of the Directive. These proposals shall consider certain specified measures, including an increase of the maximum amount of the European Regional Development Fund allocation to at least 15% of the total allocation; and the establishment of an Energy Efficiency Fund.

Energy performance certificate: all building owners should have the right to initiate or revise an EPC at any time, using different experts if they disagree with the recommendations provided

Public authorities, taking into account the leading role which they should play in the field of energy performance of buildings, shall implement the recommendations included in the energy performance certificate issued for buildings occupied by them within its validity period.

The committee provided for the mutual recognition of certificates.

Information: Member States shall ensure that local and regional authorities are involved in the development of programmes to provide information and training and to raise awareness. Suitable guidance and training must also be made available for those responsible for implementing this Directive through planning and enforcement of building standards.

By 2010, the Commission shall establish a website, which shall contain certain specified information, inter alia, the latest version of every Energy Efficiency Action Plan.