

# Interview with Mr. Ismo Grönroos-Saikkala, Head of Sector, the Energy Efficiency Unit, Directorate-General for Energy

As the Head of a Sector at the European Commission's energy efficiency unit Mr Grönroos-Saikkala is in a key position to offer valuable insights into how the Ecodesign of Energy Using Products Directive is being implemented. His Sector is in charge of developing Ecodesign regulations. REHVA Journal was pleased to get an interview from Mr Saikkala-Grönroos during his visit in Helsinki during FINNBUILD exhibition for the seminar organized by REHVA and the Finnish member of REHVA, FINVAC.



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The Directives on Ecodesign (ED\*) and Energy Labelling (ELD\*\*) cover product groups relevant for the energy performance of buildings including heating products, motors, fans and lighting. While the EPBD requires Member States to set requirements at system level and does not prescribe the level of the requirements (except for the fact that they have to be cost-optimal), the ED and the ELD address specific product groups and, in case of the ED, set specific minimum requirements. In the future, more Ecodesign requirements will be adopted for products that are part of technical building systems, and possibly also part of the building envelope (e.g. windows).

Interview by **Prof. Olli Seppänen**, Editor-in Chief, REHVA Journal

Which products will be regulated next based on the Ecodesign directive?

- Currently, we are preparing regulations for about 12 product groups to be adopted before the end of 2013. This work includes the regulations for the heaters and water heaters that are almost completed. We have worked with them for several years. Most likely these regulations will be finalized and published early 2013. The preparation of these regulations has taken time as so many types

\* Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of Ecodesign requirements for energy-using products.

\*\* Directive 2010/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy-related products

of equipment is included: oil boilers, gas fires boilers, heat pumps etc. Additionally, we have some 20 more regulations to be adopted before the end of 2014. The regulations have to deal equally and objectively all products. When adapted the regulations apply to products sold or manufactured in any Member State.

**What is the definition of product? Can a building be a product and regulated on the base of the Ecodesign directive?**

- The Ecodesign directive, in principle, would allow regulation of any product or system if it is placed on the market or put into service (at the moment of receiving the CE-marking). In these lines, in principle, even a building placed on the market, could be considered as a product.

**How can compliance of products related Ecodesign regulations be controlled? Is it a task of the Commission or Members States or who? How can the products NOT meeting the regulations be taken out of market?**

- Compliance is the responsibility of national market surveillance authorities. The Commission can take measures to coordinate and support, or in the case of non-existent or inappropriate national level action, resort to legal measures against a member state not fulfilling its duties.

In principle when national market surveillance authority identifies a non-compliant product the authority has the right, and the obligation, to remove the product from market and issue a fine on caused damage, if appropriate. The exact action depends on the product and applicable legislation in question.

**What is the estimated effect of the Ecodesign directive on primary energy use in Europe?**

- It has been calculated that the first twenty Ecodesign regulations would save some 400 TWh on an annual basis by 2020, equivalent to some 35 Mtoe of final energy. In primary energy this would correspond close to 90 Mtoe.

**Are Ecodesign regulations also giving criteria /requirements other product properties than energy related?**

- Any significant environmental aspect can be regulated if it is cost-effective (no unproportionate negative effects).

**Are indoor air quality and safety issues included in the Ecodesign regulations?**

- EU has separate legislation for health and safety. Indoor air quality and health regulations are prepared by DG SANCO (Health and Consumers). Ecodesign regulations set requirements on significant environmental impacts of a product, considering the whole life-cycle of the product.

**What is the role of CEN and other standards in relation to Ecodesign regulations?**

- The performance of a regulated product is measured on the basis of harmonized European standard, which are developed by the European standardization organizations such as CEN and CENELEC on the basis of a standardization mandate issued by the European Commission.

**What is the Eco labeling and energy labeling? Are they part of Ecodesign regulations?**

- No, the labels are not part of the Ecodesign directive. Ecodesign requirements remove the worst performing products from the market. The mandatory energy labelling requirements guide consumers towards the most cost effective/energy efficient products. The voluntary Ecolabel indicates products with highest environmental performance.

**Which HVAC product will be included in the next working programme?**

- The Commission is preparing currently an Ecodesign working plan for the years 2012 - 2014. In the priority list, there are no HVAC related products included in the draft working plan. However, other products such as windows and insulation materials, smart appliances/meters that are included in the draft plan may be of interest for people working in the buildings sector. Also, there is a plan to study the energy saving potential of the power generating equipment. ☞