

REHVA CONTRIBUTION TO THE UPCOMING HEATING AND COOLING STRATEGY, October 2025

REHVA is the Federation of European Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Associations (HVAC). It represents over 120,000 HVAC designers, building services engineers, and technicians across 24 European Countries.

1) THE STRATEGY SHOULD CONSIDER THE EVOLUTION OF ENERGY NEEDS IN BUILDINGS

The space and ventilation heating demand is reducing (insulation of buildings, heat recovery). The space cooling use is increasing (climate change, heat waves). There will be a shift towards low temperature heating systems and all-air systems. The domestic hot water demand becomes higher than the space heating demand. This energy saving potential is highly untapped. The use of renewables is increasing (on-site photovoltaics). The building becomes an energy producer. Self-use, storage and system integration (electromobility) should be developed. The re-use of existing boilers and the use of the existing gas grid infrastructure for a renewable energy carrier (e.g. biomethane) could be an interesting option. These evolutions are well identified and are new challenges for the building sector. But they are not always well addressed in the building regulations.

2) NEEDED ACTIONS AND BARRIERS FOR THE DECARBONIZATION OF HEATING AND COOLING

The needed actions for decarbonization are: Energy savings (e.g. insulation, domestic hot water flow reduction devices), free cooling, Energy efficiency (e.g. cogeneration, heat pumps, heat recovery, district low-temperature networks), Use of renewables and system integration (e.g. photovoltaics, biomass, peak demand). The heating and cooling strategy should cover all these actions, and not favour one of them. These actions can be implemented at building, energy community, municipalities or national level. Special attention should be given to the following topics: Peak demand. The development of renewables and electrification of uses creates new problems, as the intermittency of production (summer, winter) and electricity peak loads. Therefore, storable solutions, back-up systems and system integration (electricity mobility, peak load) are key. Lack of professional skills. The complex technical systems require new expertise. An EU common training and qualification scheme, based on European standards, would help professionals to work EU-wide and avoid EU market fragmentation. There is no one fits all solution. Each action needs to be seen in the overall context (at building level, at neighbourhood level) and by considering the whole energy chain from the building's needs to primary energy. Affordable buildings and public infrastructure. Buildings should be affordable. The needed investment to become Zero Emission buildings should be cost-effective. Subsidies should help to finance the initial higher investment, but subsidies should be performance driven and cost-effective.

3) RESUME OF THE REHVA PROPOSAL FOR NON-LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS TO ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION

To be efficient and affordable, the EU strategy to decarbonise heating and cooling systems must be holistic, performance based, cost effective and create an EU wide level playing field with common



key performance indicators. There is no one fits all solution. Without a skilled, qualified and sufficient workforce, the EU strategy implementation will fail. The non-legislative actions to accelerate implementation should be done in close cooperation with the EU HVAC associations. REHVA is ready to cooperate.