

The European Parliament voted for binding energy efficiency targets



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The European Commission has proposed the EU climate and energy policy framework for 2030, which sets a target to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% below the 1990 level but abandons binding targets for energy efficiency and renewables. These targets have guided R&D work in the building sector for more than 10 years. Abandoning the energy efficiency target could stop the progress and destroy the leadership of the European industry.

REHVA and many other professional organisations are deeply concerned about the EC proposal. After the release of the proposal, REHVA Technical Committee quickly prepared 'the REHVA position paper on the European Commission 2030 climate and energy policy'. It is published on page 48 and was sent to members of the Parliament and several Directorates in Brussels. The position paper says, "REHVA is deeply concerned about the lack of binding targets for energy efficiency, and strongly believes that only with the three balanced and ambitious targets for GHG, renewables and energy efficiency it is possible to ensure a successful overall climate and energy framework for Europe for 2030 and beyond".

The Parliament and its important ENVI and ITRE did not agree with the proposal of the Commission; instead, they requested in their report for more stringent binding targets in the future EU energy policy. The proposal of the Commission will still be discussed during the spring in the European Council, and also at the new Parliament later this year. It is important that Member States take a position that supports the continuing policy for better energy efficiency of buildings with binding targets, and that REHVA members in EU support this position in their countries. Europe has claimed to be a leading

body in the fight against climate change, and it should keep this position. In many cases the saved energy is the cheapest, and brings at the same time new innovations and job opportunities.

Implementation of directives takes time, and it is important to give time to Member States. The EU policy has to be consistent and farsighted. Implementation may be slow, but the issue is extremely difficult as all Member States have their own national legislation and standards. Cooperation and harmonisation are needed. The EPBD directive requires the MS to set targets for Nearly Zero Energy Buildings. The summary on page 6 shows huge variation of targets between the MS. Harmonisation is needed, at least to specify which segments of energy use are included in the target numbers and what units are used.

An important step towards harmonised implementation was taken when the Commission gave a mandate to CEN to revise the EPBD standards. The work is now in progress in several working groups with more than 100 working items, preparing more than 40 EPBD related standards, which will be drafted by April and published for comments after the summer. Final voting is expected in spring 2015. It is important for these standards to be approved, as they are valuable tools for national implementation of EPBD and a step towards common European practice.

REHVA now has an official liaison position in CEN (see page 49) and has the opportunity to participate in the work in various working groups. This is an opportunity for REHVA to have an independent, professional impact on the European standards.