

This edition of the newsletter will deal with the following:

1. The recast of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).
2. Regional fund for energy-saving housing.

1. The Recast of the EPBD

As mentioned in CEPI.eu#34, the draft report dated 3 February 2009 (see CEPI.eu#33) has been under discussion at the European Parliament. A series of amendments were tabled to this report which has now been adopted by the Industry, Research and Energy Committee of the European Parliament. The draft report has now been published in the form of a draft legislative resolution dated 6.4.2009 and is available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/reportsCom.do?language=EN&body=ITRE>. A vote on the resolution should take place at the plenary session of the European Parliament on 23/04/09 (indicative date).

Important changes have been made to the draft as presented by the European Commission. These include the following:

- **All buildings built after 31 December 2018 must be zero energy.** Zero-energy buildings are defined as buildings "where, as a result of the very high level of energy efficiency of the building, the overall annual primary energy consumption is equal to or less than the energy production from renewable energy sources on site". This means that they must produce as much energy as they consume by use for example of solar panels or heat pumps.
- Intermediate national targets will have to be set for existing buildings. Member States will have to fix minimum percentages of buildings that should be zero energy by 2015 and 2020 respectively.
- There will be more **financial support for improving the energy efficiency of buildings.**
 - Member States will be required to draw up national action plans by 30 June 2011 setting out financial instruments for improving the energy efficiency of buildings. These may include low-interest loans, fiscal rebates on income or property taxes or requiring energy suppliers to offer financial assistance to consumers.
 - The Commission should propose by 30 June 2010 additional EU financial instruments. These may include, by 2014, an Energy Efficiency Fund financed by the Community budget, the European Investment Bank and Member States, to promote private and public investment in projects increasing the energy efficiency of buildings, and VAT reductions for goods and services related to energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- **The energy performance of existing buildings** will have to be upgraded to meet at least minimum energy performance requirements when they undergo major renovation or building components and technical building systems (windows, boilers or air conditioning systems) are replaced. A "major renovation" is defined as a "refurbishment of more than 25% of the building's surface or where the total costs of the renovation are higher than 20% of the building's value.
- Minimum energy performance requirements are to be set by the Member States. However the Commission will have to establish a **common methodology for calculating the energy performance of buildings by 31 March 2010.**
- **Holiday homes** (used less than four months a year) will no longer be exempt from minimum energy performance standards.
- **Exempted** from the directive's requirements are small houses (less than 50m²), buildings for religious activities, temporary buildings used for less than 18 months, workshops and agricultural buildings with low energy demand and protected historic buildings where an energy-efficiency measure would "unacceptably alter their character".
- **Smart meters** (which measure how much and at what time of day energy is consumed) are to be installed in all new buildings and all buildings undergoing a major renovation.
- To reduce unnecessary costs the Commission should evaluate the **functioning of the construction sector.**

- The energy performance certificate should be available **on demand** and not only when a building or part of it is rented, renovated or sold.
- Member States should ensure that any certification for energy performance includes an **inspection of heating and air conditioning systems**; and that, as far as possible, inspections of heating and air conditioning systems are carried out at the same time.
- The Commission shall adopt, by 30 June 2010, guidelines specifying **minimum standards for the content, language and presentation of energy performance certificates**.
- Each Member State shall **recognise certificates issued in another Member State**.
- Energy performance certification shall be carried out by qualified and accredited experts. **Member States shall ensure mutual recognition of national qualification and accreditation**.
- By 2011 the Commission shall establish guidelines including **recommendations for minimum standards for the regular training of experts**.
- The independent control system to check the validity and quality of the certificates and inspection reports should be strengthened by ensuring that the work of each expert is **regularly controlled**, with a second level of checks with sanctions in case of irregularities.

If any member associations have questions or comments on the recast they are invited to contact the Secretariat janet.griffiths@cepi.eu.

2. Regional Fund for Energy-Saving Housing

The European Parliament has approved measures to amend the Regulation on the European Regional Development Fund. This will extend Community regional funding available for co-funding energy-efficiency and renewable energy schemes in housing to all Member States. Previously such funding was only available in the new Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. It allows the co-funding of projects such as the installation of solar panels, wall insulation, double glazing and more efficient boilers.