

Public buildings must lead the way in reducing fossil fuel imports

23 February 2023

Your government is vocal and determined in the need to reduce fossil imports and boost the EU's energy independence. The Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) represents an important opportunity to progress on this goal, by reducing the energy demand, and therefore the energy bills, of our public buildings. We are seriously concerned however about recent developments in the EED negotiations.

In my capacity as Director of the [Renovate Europe Campaign](#), I urge you to **demonstrate leadership and a commitment to reducing fossil fuel imports by supporting a robust Article 6 on public buildings at the final EED trilogue meetings on the 2nd and 9th of March.**

As you know, 40% of all energy consumed in the EU is swallowed by Europe's leaky buildings. Energy renovation is the long-lasting, sustainable solution to the energy, social and climate emergency we face.

Public buildings must lead the way, not only to set the tone and raise awareness, but also in order to pave the way towards achieving the 2030 and 2050 climate goals. Public buildings play a key role in preparing the market for the wider uptake as their diversity makes them a microcosm of what will need to happen in other buildings segments.

We therefore call on you to ensure an **effective and impactful Article 6** by:

- **Not supporting the alternative approach:**

The scope and impact of Article 6 is already very diluted through a series of exemptions, including the possibility to renovate certain types of buildings (such as historic buildings) at lower performance requirements, to limit the renovation only to buildings owned by public bodies (with incentives to those occupied) and a loose interpretation of the definition of 'public bodies'. Exempting also social housing (something Renovate Europe does not support given that social housing harbours the most vulnerable in society, mostly living in the coldest homes with the highest energy bills) undermines Article 6 even further. Allowing public authorities the alternative possibility to renovate a building in a staged-deep approach with a Building Renovation Passport by 2040 to achieve similar savings will only delay action. **The urgent need for action on buildings in the midst of the energy crisis could not be more clear - public authorities must take responsibility and show leadership.**

- **Ensuring ZEB level depth for Article 6:**

Faced with an energy and climate imperative, the **accurate level of renovation depth** is crucial for the buildings to be renovated in Article 6. Renovating to ZEB level (and not nZEB level) must be the threshold, also to stay in line with developments in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).

Your country's input at the final EED trilogue meetings will be decisive in **translating the political discourse on slashing energy imports into tangible action.**

A robust Article 6 must place public bodies as the front-runners to remain credible with citizens. **Watering down the renovation obligation for public bodies any further would severely undermine the exemplary nature of public authorities**, at a time when citizens are looking for leadership out of the energy crisis and climate emergency.

I remain at your disposal if you have any questions, and would of course be happy to discuss further if needed.

Yours sincerely,



Adrian Joyce
Renovate Europe Campaign Director

For further information

Adrian JOYCE, Campaign Director
 +32 (0) 2 639 10 11
 adrian.joyce@euroace.org
www.renovate-europe.eu

About the Renovate Europe Campaign

Renovate Europe is a political communications campaign with the ambition to reduce the energy demand of the EU building stock by 80% by 2050 through legislation and ambitious renovation programmes. Accelerating the rate of renovation is a key tool in the fight against climate change, and will deliver major benefits for people, their quality of life, and the economy.

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