



European Renewable Energy Council

For information please contact:

Lucie Tesnière, Policy Adviser

Tel: +32 2 400 10 70

Email: tesniere@erec.org

EREC welcomes the political agreement on the Energy Performance of Buildings' Directive

18th of November 2009- Brussels- The European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission have found a political agreement yesterday on the recast of the Energy Performance of Building's Directive (EPBD). "The recast of the EPBD is a good step in the right direction, sending the right signal before COP15, especially regarding the binding requirement to have by 2020 all new constructions nearly zero energy buildings, so taking into account both demand and supply side," states EREC President Arthouros Zervos.

A European Definition for Nearly Zero Energy Buildings

The recast introduces for the first time a European-wide definition of nearly zero energy buildings. Up to now only a handful of Member States had different definitions for low energy/plus energy or zero carbon buildings. This definition requires a decreased energy use in buildings but also entails a renewable energy requirement: *"The nearly zero or very low amount of energy required should to a very significant extent be covered by energy from renewable source, including renewable energy produced on-site or nearby"*. Phasing in of renewable energy in buildings means decreasing our import dependency as about 40% of the EU's energy is consumed in buildings.

All New Buildings to become Nearly Zero Energy by 2020

All new buildings have to be nearly zero by 31 December 2020 with public buildings having to fulfill this standard already by 31 December 2018. "EREC welcomes this binding requirement of introducing renewable energy in buildings at EU level by 2020: This provision reinforces the Renewable Energy Directive's provisions on buildings requiring minimum levels of use of renewable energy sources in buildings », says EREC President Arthouros Zervos. Without an obligation in buildings, it will be difficult to achieve the 2020 renewable energy target. It is therefore important that Member States take a proactive stance and anticipate the introduction of the measure. Increased energy efficiency will furthermore help each and every Member State - and the European Union as a whole - to reach the binding 2020 renewable energy targets.

Further steps to be taken

The recast of the EPBD is a first step in the right direction. However, it entails no specific targets regarding **refurbished buildings** which represent 99% of the buildings stock and the first cause of CO2 emissions before new buildings. The Energy Efficiency Action Plan should propose appropriate measures to foster the integration of renewables in such buildings in combination with energy efficiency measures. Regarding financing of implementation of the Energy Performance of Buildings' Directive, the recast foresees that Member States must come out with a 'list' of measures and instruments, 'including those of a financial matter', and the European Commission will publish a 'analysis' by 2011 regarding additional money granted under the future financial perspectives to the building sector. According to EREC, the upcoming financial perspectives which will be adopted in 2013 should reflect this urgent priority and enable better financing of renewable energy integration in buildings.

EREC, the European Renewable Energy Council, is the umbrella organisation of the major European renewable energy industry, trade and research associations active in the field of photovoltaics, small hydropower, solar thermal, bioenergy, ocean & marine, geothermal, wind energy, solar thermal electricity and biofuels. It represents an industry with an annual turnover of more than 45 billion € and more than 450.000 employees.