

Energy Efficiency Directive vote: Respect the 40% target!

(16 January 2018) The S&D group in the European Parliament has taken the lead on the effort to make energy efficiency a key pillar of the Clean Energy Package, with a clear support by other progressive groups like Greens, left and some other allies. This is shown by the outstanding outcome on the EED in the Industry Committee in November which was also based on the excellent work done in the Environment Committee.

The upcoming vote on the Energy Efficiency Directive in the Plenary is an opportunity to mark the end of the process for the European Parliament with a confirmation of the successful result in the ITRE Committee. A binding 40% energy efficiency target for 2030 is key to accelerate climate action and improve the air quality across Europe while creating new jobs.

Up to 125 million Europeans live in energy poverty, facing unaffordable energy bills, disconnections, and uncomfortable homes. 75% of homes are inefficient in the EU, which has dire health impacts with up to 100 000 excess winter deaths which can be directly attributed to cold homes. The countries most affected are in Southern and Eastern Europe. The current market rate of renovations is 1% a year, which is completely insufficient to tackle the issue: strong legislation is necessary.

A binding 40% target would enable a significant increase of the pace of renovations of homes. This is central in eliminating energy poverty, as this would tackle a root cause of the issue: inefficient homes, impossible to heat or keep cool. Every 1% increase in efficiency could lift 7 million people out of energy poverty across the EU: this is an opportunity that can't be wasted.

On jobs, a 40% target would create several million additional local jobs across Europe compared to a 30% target. We often talk of job destruction due to the energy transition, but we rarely talk about this vast untapped potential. Higher levels of ambition on energy efficiency could lead to increases in employment of up to 2.1%, while unemployment could be reduced by up to 3.0 million people.

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) is concerned about the

lack of consensus within the parliament. We believe it is very important that MEPs build on the fruitful collaboration of the progressive forces in the ENVI and ITRE Committees to ensure the European Parliament has a strong position for the trilogues with Council.

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