

European Directives: Factors for innovation and progress

Member States are sovereign in their national technical regulations subject to transpose the directives into national law adopted at the European Union level in the development which they participate.

At the beginning of Europe, directives, called “harmonization” proved impossible to be adopted by all Member States. Since the Single European Act in 1985 which amended the Treaty of Rome, the directives are “new approach”. That is to say that the Directives set essential requirements and request that manufacturers establish into harmonized European standards, the technical specifications that will meet those requirements. These European standards, once adopted, are included in the collections of the National Institutes of Standardization (DIN, BSI, AFNOR etc.).

The directives ‘new approach’ transposed into national law are used as a model for Member States to prepare their technical regulations and are also considered as guides by manufacturers to induce industrial innovations and technological progress.

HVAC equipment manufacturers launched on the European market products and materials more and more efficient, able to cope with the requirements of the directives, not only in using traditional energy sources but also renewable energy sources too.

The EPBD recast which advocates the use of more efficient techniques indicates possible avenues for innovation; e.g. (Article 6) use of energy from renewable sources, use district heating or cooling, cogeneration or heat pumps and optimization the energy use of technical building systems (Article 8).

The Ecodesign Directive and recast on energy-using products which aims at reducing the environmental impact of products, including the energy consumption throughout their entire life cycle, led manufacturers to design, built and sold on the market improved products not only in term of energy consumption but environmental impact too.

It is understood that the contribution of the manufacturers on buildings whose energy consumption is nearly zero, through innovative products or technical solutions can not be the only one.

A new integrated form of collaboration between all stakeholders: architects, consultants, manufacturers and contractors of all trades is essential not only to meet the requirements of the Directives but the quality of buildings with the promises related in terms of costs, consumptions and air quality too.

It is important to remember that buildings are meant primarily for people who are going to live or work in it and an affordable well-being for the greatest number will be the true measure of the progress and innovation. **Æ**



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