

The implementation of the new EPB-standards EU-wide will boost product innovation and create new market opportunities for our HVAC industry



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The EPB standards will be published for Final Vote by November 2016. The next step is implementation of these EPB standards. EU broad implementation is an urgent matter! The increasing urgency for measures to achieve the COP21 targets activates the different stakeholders: the local and national authorities, the energy providers/producers and those responsible for new and to renovate buildings and building systems. Actions to meet the CO₂ emission reduction (COP21 target) and fossil fuel import reduction (additional EU target). Apart from the regulating authorities two main actors can be considered:

- the building and building services industry responsible for reducing the energy use;
- the energy providers/producers working on the decarbonisation of the energy grids.

These two groups are supplementary but also two sides of the balancing scale. CO₂ emission reduction and the dependence on imported fossil fuels are the main drivers for our European energy policy. When energy providers/producers will be successful to realise a high level of decarbonisation of the grid and at the same time reducing the imported amount of fossil fuels the urgency for the building industry may become less? This may help our industry, as this may lead to higher energy prices which will ease the cost-effectiveness of energy saving measures in the build environment. But this may also reduce our market opportunities. If the electricity grid becomes more sustainable which means that the non-renewable Primary Energy Factor and the CO₂ emission factor will decrease (see table

B16 in EN ISO/52000-1). This results automatically in a better Energy Performance (where the energy use is expressed in kWh/m².y based on the non-renewable energy fraction producing CO₂ emissions) for buildings without improving their thermal properties or system efficiency. This means there will be less incentive to reduce the energy use. This may slow down the innovation and weaken the positioning of the EU producers on the global market. Product innovation and more efficient HVAC systems are a key issue to reduce the energy use in buildings. Innovation will only happen if applying new (very often already existing) technologies are cost-effective, easy and without barriers due to typical national assumptions. Using the harmonised procedures of EPB system standards will contribute substantially. Therefore it is most urgent that all stakeholders support the use of the new set of EPB standards throughout Europe in a harmonised way. All stakeholders: industry, consultants, installers and contractors should support the use of the EPB-standards and use their influence to convince their regulators to include this in their national building regulation. When the EPB standards are published next year it is up to us, the building and building system industry and professionals, to support the implementation EU wide. REHVA could be of help in supporting their members who play in most EU countries a key role in the communication with industry, regulators and educators. Currently initiatives are being elaborated out to establish an EPB-standards implementation network (EPB Center) to support the dissemination actions needed EU-wide and on national level. ■