

Towards a new normal in 2021

2020 was a very stressing year for most of us. The COVID-19 epidemic is not yet losing its grip on our society. Hope is appearing at the horizon and after mid 2021 we expect to be almost back to a new normal. A new normal where we are aware of our vulnerability for infectious diseases caused by those COVID viruses or alike and the role the indoor climate and the ventilation systems have.

2021 and years to come will require our attention for IEQ and climate change measures. Our existing and new buildings need to become resilient against airborne infection diseases and become zero carbon at the same time. The back to normal will not be continuing to do the same we did before. The Renovation Wave and agreed decarbonisation target was already announced and became last week official. The target of the EU: 55% reduction by 2030 towards zero emission by 2050 has now to be combined with a COVID resilient IEQ target. What the latter means is slowly becoming clearer.

REHVA did a great job by developing their COVID-19 guidance and course. The tools are available and further developing. REHVA Journal decided to include the core of the guidance in this issue as an historic proof and handy document but at the same time referring to our website where all future updates are going to be published. The REHVA TRC Task Force on COVID-19 worked very hard during the last 9 months and will continue to do so. Many experts from our REHVA members contributed to this. There was also a very active exchange of information with other platforms of which many are part of the IEG-GA (IEQ Global Alliance www.ieq-ga.net) where REHVA holds the secretariat.

The more prominent inclusion of IEQ in the EU Renovation Wave and the decarbonisation target will require the HVAC&R professionals to come forward

with more innovative solutions. The holistic approach at building and system level will be extended to the energy grid. The set of EPB standards as developed and used to implement the EPBD in EU has last November been extended with EN 17423 on EPB and Primary Energy Factors (PEF) and CO₂ emission coefficients (see www.epb.center). This standard is creating a level playing field on these issues. Needed to answer questions on the future of the gas infrastructure, the positioning of the expected H₂ market, the use of certified zero-carbon biofuels and the decarbonisation of our electricity grid. All challenges to be cleared in the near future.

As we cannot wait REHVA journal offers you articles about our currently used and improved technologies. Articles on heat pumps, on an improved standard on HP system performance and new technical developments on HP's. Heat pump application is currently the answer towards zero carbon. Improving our energy efficiency using BMS, phase change materials and waste water heat recovery are also part of the equation and articles in this issue.

The REHVA board, the editorial board of the REHVA Journal and REHVA staff wishes all our readers a healthy, prosperous and inspiring 2021. We thank our readers and all authors that contributed to the success of this journal for their interest and contributions during 2020. ■



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