

# COVID-19 crisis – fertile grounds for the Renovation Wave initiative?

This RJ special on COVID-19 issues includes several articles from various experts around Europe. They all want to share with you their knowledge and experience in this field. There are some very practical articles informing you about the use of UV-C or handling the recirculation issue. Also, several articles on calculating the risk of infection which provide basic information. These calculation procedures should be understood as tools to compare certain ventilation strategies to support experts in advising on the best ventilation strategy. Several articles demonstrate this effectively.

In this context I have to mention the REHVA services on COVID-19 which have been made available since April 2020. The REHVA website offers you the last updated and peer reviewed information [1]. Via this link you can find guidance and FAQ information that can be downloaded, information on the new REHVA COVID-19 ONLINE COURSE and accessible webinars on COVID-19.

I am aware that COVID-19 crisis is currently at the forefront of our attention. Against this background the professional community should revisit the basis of the current ventilation requirements and the design of our ventilation systems. This is work to be done by the REHVA Technology and Research Committee (TRC) with support of the REHVA members. Results of this work should be shared with relevant CEN and ISO technical committees to update the current standards in this field.

Yes, there is a COVID-19 crisis, but we should not forget that the currently we are on a verge of a climate crisis. I refer to a comprehensive Report Zero Carbon Buildings 2050 Summary Report CE Delft, the Netherlands (see page 83) where it is stated that the current policies focusing on incentives and information are not enough to achieve full decarbonisation of the residential building sector. Additional regulatory and pricing policies as well as instruments that support the deployment of innovation, are needed to reach the full

emission reduction potential. The areas that have the largest GHG emission reduction potential are:

- Reducing energy demand by improving the energy performance of the existing building envelope
- Switching to zero-carbon fuels for heating, including a switch in heating systems
- Reducing embedded carbon in construction and renovation materials

For those interested in the development of the European policy, I also refer to a recent BPIE report titled: A Guidebook to European Building Policy, giving an overview of key EU legislation aimed at transforming and decarbonising the European building stock.

## Energy gains and economic growth: The Renovation Wave Initiative

The European Commission: Renovation is a major opportunity for economic growth as it provides jobs and boosts the construction sector, which is largely dominated by local businesses, while strengthening Europe's industrial competitiveness. Building renovation is therefore central to the post-COVID-19 economic recovery, and was specifically referred to in the recovery plan published by the European Commission on 27 May 2020.

The renovation wave initiative, as presented this October, will build on measures agreed under the Clean energy for all Europeans package, notably the requirement for each EU country to publish a [long-term building renovation strategy](#) (LTRS) [2], other aspects of the amending Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings ((EU) 2018/844), and building-related aspects of each Member State's [national energy and climate plans](#) (NECP) [3]. ■



**JAAP HOGELING**  
Editor-in-Chief  
REHVA Journal

[1] <https://www.rehva.eu/activities/covid-19-guidance>

[2] [https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/long-term-renovation-strategies\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/long-term-renovation-strategies_en)

[3] [https://ec.europa.eu/info/energy-climate-change-environment/overall-targets/national-energy-and-climate-plans-necps\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/energy-climate-change-environment/overall-targets/national-energy-and-climate-plans-necps_en)