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European Parliament shows how to make ‘energy efficiency first’ more than a slogan

Orgalime has warmly welcomed today’s European Parliament plenary vote adopting the final text of the review of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). Pending formal approval by the Council, the revised EPBD marks a milestone in the European clean energy transition and on the path to sustainability for our planet, for Europe’s citizens and for our economy. “This outcome sends a clear and important signal, as the EPBD review has now set the benchmark for negotiations on the remaining Clean Energy files,” comments Malte Lohan, Orgalime Director General. “This is particularly important at a time when our energy system is undergoing the fundamental and irreversible transformation of decarbonisation, decentralisation and digitisation.”

The final text marks a significant step forward from the 2010 EPBD review, reflecting the ambition and commitment of the Members of the European Parliament and Rapporteur MEP Bendt Bendtsen in particular. The Directive now emphasises how we manage energy in buildings to realise further savings and, for the first time, allows for buildings to be considered part of the future energy system. This can empower consumers and give them the satisfaction of being able to manage their own energy consumption while optimising their overall carbon footprint and environmental performance.

2018 is now the year to carry forward these bar-setting decisions. At EU level, this means finalising the remaining clean energy files now and in a way that delivers tangible results – as Orgalime has explained in a recent [position paper](#) and lays out in more detail in its hot-off-the-press [recommendations](#) for the upcoming trilogue negotiations. Key priorities must include the incorporation of long-term renovation strategies in the new Governance Regulation and ensuring a strong Article 7 of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) on energy savings obligations. Moreover, it will be necessary to ensure a comprehensive approach combining greater ambition in renewable energy with greater ambition in energy efficiency and effective gap-filling mechanisms in the Governance proposal, and to put in place a market design framework that is favourable to consumer empowerment and to viewing buildings as sources of flexibility. At national level, the focus must be on developing determined long-term renovation strategies – in particular to promote smart technologies, well-connected buildings and communities, and to define policies and actions to target all public buildings.

Orgalime is convinced that a whole-hearted pursuit of these follow-up actions will be crucial to the success of the energy transition in Europe. “Our industries stand ready as stakeholders to actively contribute to these decisive tasks ahead of Member States,” concludes Malte Lohan. “We are convinced that this will not only help achieve our energy, climate and environmental objectives, increase consumer satisfaction and overall societal well-being, but also secure the EU’s position as the home of leading-edge digitally enabled industrial innovation – generating local jobs and growth in Europe in the process.”

Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 42 trade federations representing the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 23 European countries. The industry employs nearly 11 million people in the EU and in 2016 accounted for some €2,000 billion of output. The industry represents over a quarter of the output of manufactured products and over a third of the manufactured exports of the European Union.

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