



Autumn/Winter 2023

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Energy Performance Buildings Directive - Final Phase

After 2 years of negotiations and advocacy, one of our core pieces of EU legislation, the EPBD, is supposed to come to the final phase.



In the trilogue between the EU council, the EU Parliament and the EU commission, a preliminary agreement has been reached.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20231204IPR15651/energy-efficiency-of-buildings-meps-strike-deal-with-council>

These are the relevant regulations:

All new buildings should be **zero-emission as of 2030**; new buildings occupied or owned by **public authorities** should be **zero-emission as of 2028**.

1. **For residential buildings**, member states will have to put in place measures to ensure a reduction in the **average primary energy used of at least 16% by 2030 and at least 20 to 22% by 2035**. Member States are free to choose which buildings to target and which measures to take.
2. Member states will have to renovate the **16% worst-performing non-residential buildings by 2030** and, **by 2033, the worst-performing 26% through minimum energy performance requirements**.
 1. The national measures will have to ensure **that at least 55% of the decrease of the average primary energy use is achieved through the renovation of the worst-performing buildings**.
 1. If technically and economically suitable, member states would

have to deploy **solar installations** progressively in public and non-residential buildings, depending on their size, and **in all new residential buildings by 2030**.

2. Member states will adopt measures to decarbonise heating systems and **phase out fossil fuels in heating and cooling with a view to completely phasing out fossil fuel boilers by 2040**. Member states will also have to **stop subsidising stand-alone fossil fuel boilers as of 2025**. Financial incentives will still be possible for hybrid heating systems, such as those combining a boiler with a solar thermal installation or a heat pump.

Although the official documents are not yet available, there is growing information that the so-called "social safeguards" for tenants and vulnerable households have survived the negotiations and have remained in the text of the EPBD.

According to the official reading of the EU Commission:

1. **"Member States will also have to ensure that there are safeguards for tenants, to help tackle the risk of eviction of vulnerable households caused by disproportionate rent increases following a renovation."**
2. **"To fight energy poverty and bring down energy bills, financing measures will have to incentivize and accompany renovations and be targeted in particular at vulnerable customers and worst-performing buildings, in which a higher share of energy-poor households live."**

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6423

The EU regulation will be a blueprint for the necessary implementation of the EPBD at national level in the legislation of all EU Member States.

Next steps: The EU Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) must formally adopt the trilogue-agreement in their meeting January 23, 2024, followed by the formal adoption of the EU council.

IUT board decides on Manifesto for the EU Elections



IUT board in the historical city hall of Delft, NL

On invitation of the Nederlandse Woonbond (Dutch Union of Tenants), the IUT board has met in Delft, October 25th-27th. Attached to the meeting was a session of the IUT Housing Policy Working Group. Ms. **Kath Scanlon**, Deputy Director of London School of Economics (LSE), participated digitally to the Board meeting introducing her recent report on the financialization of housing. During a site visit of the Green Village of the Technical University of Delft, the IUT team learned about the adaptation of cities to climate change -a model in which researchers, students, start-ups, entrepreneurs, and government bodies' work every day on innovation challenges with focus on three main themes: Sustainable building

and renovation, future energy systems and a climate adaptive city. The Green Village is an 'open air laboratory' located at TU Delft Campus, and the visit consisted in getting to learn about the different projects onsite and about its the constant evolution of its sustainable projects.

Main agenda point of the IUT board was the debate and decision about the IUT manifesto – the priorities for the new EU-Parliament 2024-2029: “Eradicate the housing crisis by 2030”.



Dan Nicander, Kim van Sparrentak and Barbara Steenbergen

The final Manifesto¹ was presented and handed over by IUT secretary general Mr. **Dan Nicander** to the Member of the European Parliament Ms. **Kim van Sparrentak** (Greens, The Netherlands).

EU Commissions' recommendation to tackle Energy Poverty

October 2023, a recommendation² of the European Commission to tackle the energy poverty across the EU was published. Energy

¹ <https://www.iut.nu/news-events/iut-priorities-for-the-european-parliament-2024-2029/>

poverty affects citizens in every EU country: In 2022, high energy prices together with the cost-of-living crisis meant that an estimated 9.3% of Europeans were and are unable to keep their homes adequately warm.

Therefore, the Commission recognising the need for even more coordinated action to counter this negative trend has published a series of recommendations on measures and policies for EU member states, directly correlated to the European Green Deal. IUT is member of the EU working group on vulnerable consumers and has been contributing to the final text.

https://energy.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-publishes-recommendations-tackle-energy-poverty-across-eu-2023-10-23_en

The recommendation contains several articles which contains measures directly aimed at resolving the issue of housing and energy affordability and safeguarding the rights of tenants.

For instance, the articles 30, 31 and 32 concern the importance of pairing building and energy renovations with social inclusion and urban regeneration programmes to protect vulnerable households. As stated in Art. 31: “Vulnerable households must be shielded from higher housing costs that may follow renovations and result in evictions, displacement, and gentrification. Therefore, it is crucial that Member States watch their overall policy mix carefully regarding direct or indirect negative impacts on vulnerable households. Measures to protect tenants from negative and unwanted impacts can include conditional financial support to renovation works preventing the eviction of tenants, tax incentives for landlords, financial support settle or reschedule rental arrears for poorer households, cap on the increase of rent if the owner receives public financial support, or legislative measures ensuring a balance between rent increases and energy savings

² Commission's recommendation on Energy Poverty https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202302407

achieved through the renovation. Enforcement of the regulatory framework protecting tenants and addressing landlords, as well as access to information about the right to housing and tenants' rights against evictions are also essential steps".

Article 15 in section V of the document asks the Member States to "Establish regulatory and social safeguards and analyse the policy mix to ensure that housing costs following energy efficiency improvements or renovations of dwellings do not result in excessive increases in rents and housing costs which can lead to unaffordability issues, displacement of residents, evictions and gentrification."

The recommendations are accompanied by a Staff Working Document³, which contains a more detailed analysis of the recommended measures. Following the recently adopted revision of the [Energy Efficiency Directive](#), the recommendation outlines how energy poverty can be tackled at national level.

Clean heat transition for vulnerable solid fuel users in Central and Eastern Europe

October 10th, on the occasion of the European Week of Regions and Cities, FEANTSA organised a conference "Clean and affordable heat for all" to explore the challenges that many poor families in Central and Eastern Europe face due to energy poverty and lack of resources. In fact, in CEE, many of the poorest households rely on firewood or carbon heating.

Anna Bajomi, coordinator of the event, invited three different speakers. The CEO of Habitat for Humanity in Romania Robert Patrascioiu presented the severe housing deprivation in rural Romania and the urgent need for a heat transition. He stated that appr. 200.000

³ Commission Staff Working Document https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/SWD_2023_331_1_EN_autre_document_travail_service_part1_v4.pdf

Romanian families have no electricity and running water, 21,5% of the population has severe house deprivation and 12,5% can't keep their homes adequately warm.

The analyst of the Polish Institute for Structural Research Jan Frankowski presented a case study showing that most low-income people still use coal and wood as fuel for home heating.

The last speaker Aranka Rostas, representative of Lightbringer Foundation shared the case of the Hungarian village Bank where most families heat their houses from firewood, with some of them entirely disconnected from electricity and living in darkness. Therefore, the organisation 'Foundation' in Budapest organized a funding campaign for solar panels that are now providing light and electricity for the families.

The transformative potential of the Social Climate Fund, to be established in 2026, may be a game changer for CEE countries that can help to alleviate energy poverty and drive social justice.

Political agreement on short term accommodation rentals



Another important legislative milestone in the regulation of Short-Term Rentals has been reached: **The EU Council and the European Parliament agreed on a provisional political agreement⁴** on the collection and exchange of

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/11/16/tourism-council-and-parliament-reach-a-deal-to-bring-more-transparency-to-short-term-accommodation->

data on short-term rentals. The regulations are intended to introduce harmonised registration requirements for hosts and short-term rentals. After registration, **hosts will receive a number** with which they can offer their accommodation on the rental market.

These registration numbers can be checked by the competent national authorities. For their part, the **online platforms must ensure** that the registration number enables **users to identify the property** in question and that the information provided is **reliable and complete**. The data generated is exchanged between the public administrations. It will be included in tourism statistics and as well **enable public administrations to take action against illegal offers**.

The platforms must also carry out **random checks** to ensure that the information is correct. **In the case of violations, the national authorities can decide to block the registration number** in question or request the platforms to **delete the host** in question. **Sanctions can be imposed on both platforms and hosts**.

Member states must set up a **single point of contact within 24 months** of the regulations coming into force. **Platforms must send information such as the address, the corresponding registration number, or the URL** of the user's registration to these **centres on a monthly basis**. For small online platforms, the transmission is required every three months.

In addition, the text has been adapted to the provisions of the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Markets Act (DMA), as there were previously no regulations in this area.

In the next step, the regulation has to be approved and formally adopted by EU council

[rentals/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Tourism%3a+Council+and+Parliament+reach+a+deal+to+bring+more+transparency+to+short-term+accommodation+rentals](https://www.european-council.europa.eu/media/assets/4/4F/2023/10/25/231025_2023_C04_0010_en.pdf)

and EU Parliament. The IUT has been strongly involved in the legislative process.

Barbara Steenbergen, head of IUT EU liaison office; “We now have an EU framework legislation that enables member states and local authorities to take effective action against illegal STRs and at the same time decide locally what sanctions and bans to impose.”

Housing for the Common Good and the Ukraine Recovery

October 24th, the Vienna House in Brussels organized the event “Housing for the Common Good: Sustainable Governance from European best practice for recovery in Ukraine”.⁵ The event focused on the need for ‘Common Good’ approaches to affordable and sustainable housing, since access to adequate housing is central to social and economic well-being and recovery efforts in the EU and in the Ukraine.



Speakers at the Ukraine recovery event in the Vienna House, left Ms. **Kauer**, right Mr. **Amann** with Ms. **Estrella Dura Ferrandis** MEP (3rd from right)

In fact, many cities, regions, and countries across Europe are looking into new options for new options for new, sustainable, and inclusive housing schemes, founded on a sound governance framework. In the debate, Austria was presented as an inspiration for social and affordable housing policy since Vienna, its

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<https://presse.wien.gv.at/presse/2023/10/25/wohnungsgemeinnuetzigkeit-als-vorbild-fuer-die-ukraine-und-europa>

capital, is playing a lighthouse role in European initiatives on affordable and social housing.

The event was opened by Ms. **Michaela Kauer**, the Director of the Brussels office of the City of Vienna. Mr. **Wolfgang Amann**, director of Institute for Real Estate Construction and Housing in Vienna, presented the Austrian Limited-Profit Housing Associations (LPHA) as a model to implement affordable housing alternatives in Ukraine. The study “rebuilding a place called home” from Ammann, presented together with Co-author Professor **Julie Lawson** from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia, underlined the fact that a systemic approach for a new start in Ukraine must be based on the incorporation of Civil Society.

Ms. **Vita Shnaider**, Ukrainian scientific expert and member of the NGO “New Housing Polica” underlined the fact that a new legal housing framework is needed to attract not for profit housing investment for Ukraine and its recovery.

Mr. **Grzegorz Gajda**, Senior Urban Specialist at the European Investment Bank, underlined the necessary mutual collaboration and the readiness of the EIB to contribute to an affordable housing recovery in Ukraine.

IUT in the media

IUT at the International Social Housing Festival Barcelona:

https://www.barcelona.cat/infobarcelona/es/tema/vivienda/el-festival-internacional-de-la-vivienda-social-tendra-lugar-en-barcelona_1285646.html

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWZhKMz50XQ>

<https://www.msn.com/es-us/noticias/espana/camaradas-de-alquiler-las-asociaciones-de-inquilinos-ganan-fuerza/arra-AA1cwakr?li=BBqdrQU>

Energy Performance Buildings Directive:

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/buildings/opinion/european-parliament-wants-fair-flexible-approach-to-efficient-buildings-law/>

Letter to EU Housing Minister’s meeting:

<https://eurocities.eu/latest/time-to-end-housing-crisis-an-open-letter/>

Dan Nicander new IUT secretary general:

https://www.tv4play.se/klipp/3ddbc84c8af785730e3b/han-k%C3%A4mpar-f%C3%B6r-ny%C3%A4rdens-hyresg%C3%A4ster-bostaden-%C3%A4r-en-m%C3%A4nsklig-r%C3%A4ttighet?playlist=auto_67ff22880e988cd4d149

<https://www.hemhyra.se/nyheter/ny-generalsekreterare-fran-malmo-ska-kampa-for-varldens-hyresgaster-omtumlande/>

<https://www.iut.nu/news-events/dan-nicander-appointed-as-new-iut-secretary-general/>

Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0nNQIONY08&list=PLPI5h6LyLZYXBVr1zx0g5k2y6XpXOJPAI&index=3>

European Free Alliance:

<https://e-f-a.org/2023/11/14/islands-forum-s-affordable-housing-in-islands/>

<https://www.fnp.frl/en/blog/news/fnp-haalt-europa-naar-terschelling-om-over-wonen-te-spreken/>

Berlin Tenants’ Association:

<https://www.berliner-mieterverein.de/aktuelles/newsletter/wir-bezahlen-die-arbeit-der-vermieterlobby-mit-unseren-mieten-nl1223.htm>

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