

# EASAC scientists welcome the European Parliament's final approval of the revised Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)

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The European Parliament on Tuesday 12 March gave final green light to plans, to help reduce energy consumption and greenhouse-gas emissions from the buildings sector. In its late stage of negotiations, the law had been subject to political controversies and in particular opposition from German center-right Parliamentarians.

EASAC Vice-President Prof. Brian Norton comments: "I am happy to see that the Directive takes forward many of the key recommendations of the EASAC report on "Decarbonisation of Buildings." With 25% of Europe's Greenhouse Emissions coming from Buildings, the report published in 2021 suggested fundamental policy changes. Up and until now, legislation solely looked at the energy used for operating buildings. EASAC had therefore called upon policymakers to broaden the scope and look at emissions embodied in construction materials and methods – both for new buildings and building renovation.

Says Norton: "This is happening now. For the first time, the EPBD will require regulation of the carbon embodied in buildings associated with their construction, maintenance, and demolition".

Under the revised EPBD, from 2030 member states must (i) disclose both embodied and operational carbon for all new buildings and (ii) set whole life carbon targets for buildings that progressively lower over time. From 2030, all new buildings must not produce any emissions on site and use only a very small amount of renewable energy or district heating wherever feasible. Member states will also be required to (i) provide finance to support for deep renovation, of the existing building stock by 2050, (ii) establish

national renovation plans, (iii) introduce bespoke stage-by-stage plans for enable building owners to do deep renovations. Importantly there is a requirement to protect tenants from eviction following renovation.

The EPBD also aims to (i) increase the number of buildings that directly harness solar energy and (ii) phase out of fossil fuel boilers by 2040. “We are also happy to see that there is a clear focus on maintaining indoor environmental quality as recommended in the EASAC report,” concludes Norton.

The directive will now have to be formally endorsed by the Council of Ministers to become law.