

Minimum Energy Performance Standards and renovation trajectories in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive

This factsheet is a guide to measures in the updated Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD, EU/2024/1275) whose purpose is to stimulate renovation across the EU.

The publication sets out a sequence for how national governments could introduce policy measures and guidance to facilitate the successful implementation of Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) and renovation trajectories for European buildings, as outlined in the EPBD.

The EPBD and renovation

In May 2024 the European Commission finalised an update to the EU's primary law governing the sustainability of buildings, the EPBD. The intention of the revision is to help Europe achieve a fully decarbonised building stock by 2050, contributing to the EU's wider target of climate neutrality by the same year. Member States have until May 2026 to transpose the provisions of the updated EPBD.

The update contains new measures to encourage the renovation of existing buildings across the EU, with a focus on the worst-performing buildings. At

present almost 75% of the EU's building stock is energy inefficient (European Commission, 2023), with the annual renovation rate at around 1% (BPIE, 2022), meaning without intervention, the decarbonisation of buildings would take centuries.

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What are Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS)?

MEPS are specifications designed to limit the amount of energy that can be consumed by a device or product — in this case, a building. As an example, MEPS for buildings can be based on a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating — a document that sets out a building's energy efficiency rating and recommends ways to improve it.

As defined in the EPBD, MEPS are:

“Rules that require existing buildings to meet an energy performance requirement as part of a wide renovation plan for a building stock or at a trigger point on the market (such as sale, rent, donation or change of purpose within the cadastre or land registry), in a period of time or by a specific date, thereby triggering renovation of existing buildings.”

The mandatory MEPS set out in the updated EPBD cover non-residential buildings, while Member States should establish national trajectories for the progressive renovation of the national residential building stock.

The EPBD states that when introducing these standards Member States should have in place an enabling framework, including technical and financial support, especially for vulnerable households.

Mandatory EU-wide MEPS for residential buildings may be introduced within future EPBD revisions if the Commission finds the EU is not on track for a decarbonised, zero-emission building (ZEB) stock by 2050.

A **residential building** is a building at least half of which is used for residential purposes. If less than half of the overall useful floor area is used for residential purposes, the building is classified under non-residential buildings in accordance with its purpose-oriented design.

A **non-residential building** is a building which is mainly used or intended for non-residential purposes. If at least half of the overall useful floor area is used for residential purposes, the building is classified as a residential building.

National Building Renovation Plans

National Building Renovation Plans (NBRPs) are a replacement for the long-term renovation strategies that Member States previously had to develop under previous versions of the EPBD.

Member States should prepare and submit NBRPs to the European Commission every five years. The first draft NBRP needs to be submitted by 31 December 2025, with the first NBRP due one year later by 31 December 2026. NBRPs should be submitted within Member States' integrated National Energy Climate Plans (NECPs).

As set out in Annex II of the EPBD, NBRPs should include an overview of renovation policies and funding, and are also required to specify MEPS for non-residential buildings and the renovation trajectory for residential buildings.

Overview of MEPS in the EPBD

The updated EPBD text divides measures that are designed to encourage renovation into two approaches for residential and non-residential buildings. A list of exemptions from these provisions is listed in Article 9, Paragraph 6 of the EPBD.

Residential buildings

The EPBD requires Member States to establish a national trajectory, based on statistical sampling and EPCs, that leads to the progressive renovation of the residential building stock into ZEB standard by 2050.

The national trajectory should be expressed as a decrease in the average primary energy use of the entire residential building stock from 2020 to 2050. It should also quantify the number of residential buildings, and residential building units or floor area, that should be renovated annually. Member States shall ensure that the average primary energy use of the entire residential building stock:

- a. decreases by at least 16% compared to 2020 by 2030.
- b. decreases by at least 20–22% compared to 2020 by 2035.
- c. by 2040, 2045 and 2050 is equivalent to or lower than the nationally determined value, in line with the gradual transformation of the residential building stock into ZEB by 2050.

A minimum of 55% of the decrease in the average primary energy use will need to be achieved through the renovation of the worst-performing residential buildings (defined as the 43% worst-performing buildings).

Member States have the flexibility to decide what tools are used to achieve these renovation targets, such as MEPS, technical assistance and financial support measures.

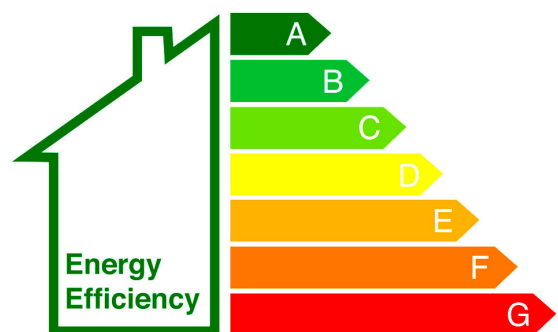
Non-residential buildings

The EPBD sets mandatory objectives to improve the least energy-efficient sections of the European non-residential building stock through MEPS.

Member States are required to identify the 16% and 26% worst-performing sections of the non-residential building stock, compared with the energy efficiency of the stock at the start of 2020. The 16% worst-performing section of the stock must be renovated by 2030, and the 26% section by 2033.

Compliance with these MEPS by individual buildings is to be verified by checking EPCs or other means defined by Member States.

Further percentage segments of the non-residential stock, identified against the 2020 baseline, would need to be renovated by 2040 and 2050. The calculation of these additional segments should factor in the target that all non-residential building stock should be ZEB standard by 2050.

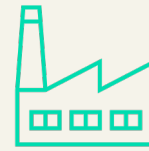


MEPS for buildings can be based on a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating

Steps to support implementation



Residential buildings



Non-residential buildings

1

As per Article 3, point 1 (a) in the EPBD, create an overview of the national building stock for different building types.

This process should include the collection of available data on the national residential and non-residential building stock as of 1 January 2020.

2

Using the data collected in Step 1, create a national trajectory for the renovation of residential buildings, where the average primary energy use of the residential building stock compared to 1 January 2020:

- a. decreases by at least 16% by 2030
- b. decreases by at least 20–22% by 2035
- c. by 2040, and then every 5 years, decreases in line with the transformation of the residential building stock into a zero-emission building stock by 2050.

Note: 55% of the renovations need to be in the worst-performing buildings, defined as the worst-performing 43% buildings.

Using the data collected in Step 1, establish national maximum energy performance thresholds using the building stock as of 1 January 2020:

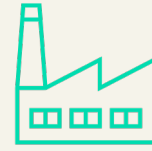
- a. equates to the 16% worst-performing non-residential buildings (to apply as of 2030)
- b. equates to the 26% worst-performing non-residential buildings (to apply as of 2033)
- c. also establish two more ambitious thresholds to inform the 2040 and 2050 MEPS.

3

To achieve residential building energy reductions, put in place measures such as MEPS, alongside technical and financial support.

Establish method of enforcement and compliance by individual buildings, with the thresholds checked based on EPCs, or where appropriate by other methods.

Steps to support implementation (continued)



4

As per guidance in Article 3, point 1 (b) of EPBD, use data from Step 1 and the targets set in Step 2 to create a roadmap towards a highly energy efficient and decarbonised national building stock with all existing buildings transformed to ZEB standard by 2050, as part of the NBRP.

Ensure that MEPS and renovation targets are compatible with overall trajectory for building stock and adjust as needed.



5

Develop detailed public guidance on the introduction of Minimum Energy Performance Standards for non-residential buildings and a renovation trajectory for residential buildings.

Publish details of these measures within the draft NBRP.



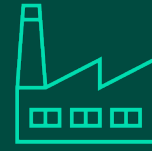
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Ensure that the above targets and measures are written into national law ahead of the EPBD transposition deadline (May 2026).

Future dates for MEPs implementation



Residential buildings



Non-residential buildings

The average primary energy use of the whole residential building stock must have decreased by at least 16% (with 55% of this coming from the 43% worst-performing buildings).

2030

The 16% worst-performing non-residential buildings must be renovated.

The average primary energy use of the whole residential building stock must have decreased by at least 20–22% (with 55% of this coming from the 43% worst-performing buildings).

2035

2033

The 26% worst-performing non-residential buildings must be renovated.

The average primary energy use of the national residential building stock must have decreased by a percentage — in line with the transformation of the residential building stock into ZEB standard by 2050.

2040

An additional nationally-determined percentage of the non-residential building stock must be renovated — to ensure transformation of the non-residential stock into ZEB standard by 2050.

The average primary energy use of the national residential building stock must have decreased by a percentage — in line with the transformation of the residential building stock into ZEB standard by 2050.

2045

The residential building stock should be ZEB standard by this date.

2050

The non-residential building stock should be ZEB standard by this date.

Zero Emission
Building standard

Enabling conditions required

Below is a checklist of enabling conditions for Member States to implement the MEPS measures outlined in the EPBD.

- National government ministries have access to good quality data on the energy efficiency of their building stock.



- A framework of EPCs is in place with good national coverage and technical support harmonised with the framework in Annex I of the EPBD.



- There are sufficient skilled labourers to facilitate an acceleration in building renovation.



- Building owners, landlords and tenants are aware, and willing to co-operate in necessary renovation of their properties.



- Sufficient public and private finance is made available to fund widespread renovation in line with MEPS.



Government measures required for implementation

Regulations

- Energy Performance Certificate framework in place at national level as per EPBD.
- Minimum Energy Performance Standards established for non-residential buildings.
- Renovation trajectories established for residential buildings.
- Mechanism in place to ensure compliance with Minimum Energy Performance Standards at the building level.

Information

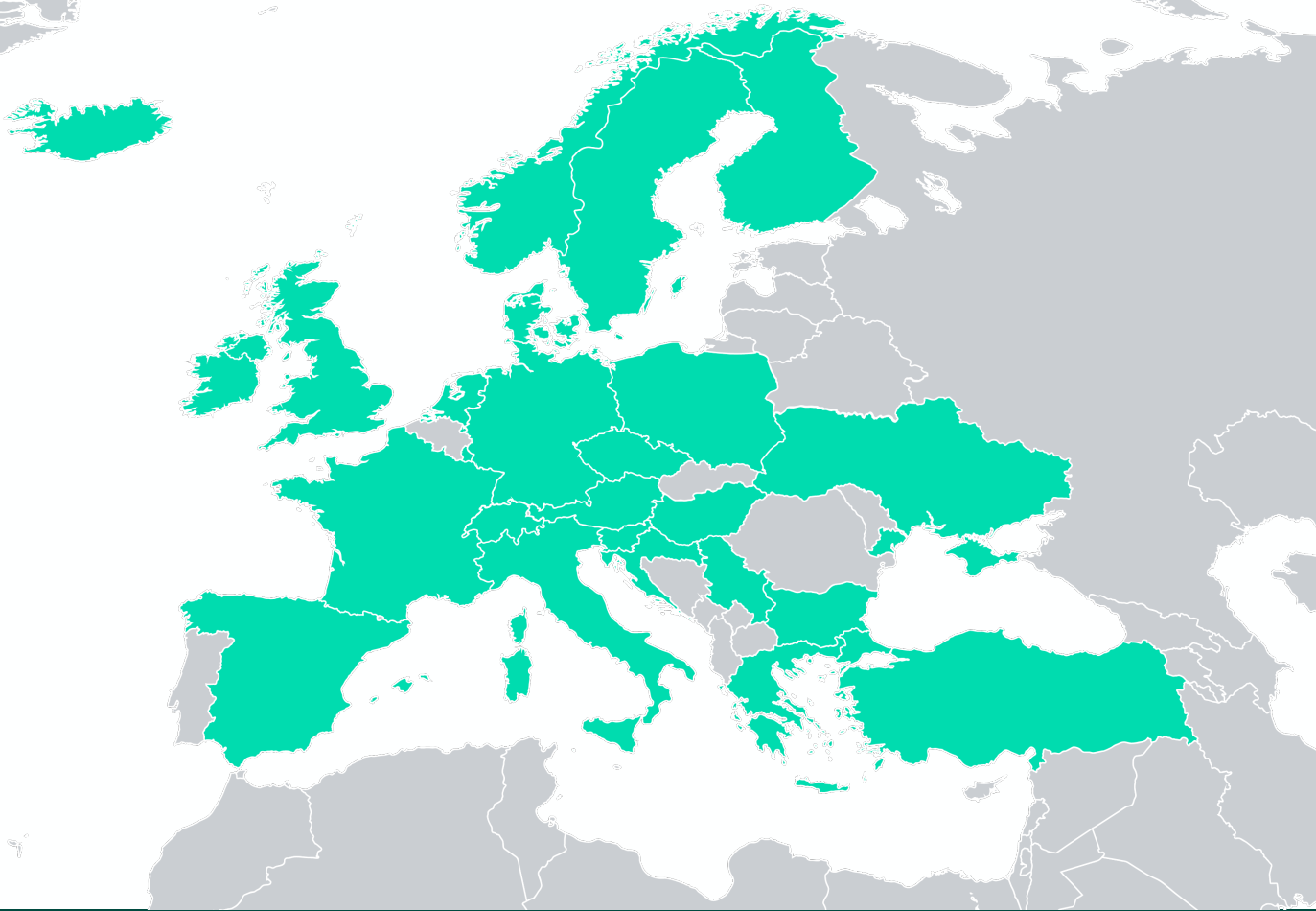
- Data collection at national level on the average primary energy use of non-residential and residential buildings.
- Data collection on vulnerable households as part of the National Building Renovation Plan to ensure that these households are prioritised for renovation funding.
- Technical assistance provided, including through one-stop-shops.
- Widespread information campaign launched on MEPS so that landlords, tenants and homeowners are aware well in advance of whether they will be affected.

Incentives

- Appropriate financial measures are provided, especially targeting vulnerable households and those affected by energy poverty.
- Integrated financing schemes providing incentives for staged and deep renovations.
- Government-funded retraining schemes to ensure there are sufficient workers to carry out large scale energy renovation.



European Green Building Councils



WorldGBC and the Europe Regional Network

The World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) is the largest and most influential local-regional-global action network, leading the transformation to sustainable and decarbonised built environments for everyone, everywhere.

Our Europe Regional Network represents over 20 national Green Building Councils (GBCs) working with seven regional partners to put sustainable buildings at the heart of a prosperous and equitable future for Europe.

European GBCs are committed to supporting Member States with the implementation of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive to:

- Set the EU on track to achieve its climate goals
- Boost energy security and tackle energy poverty
- Create large numbers of long-lasting green jobs
- Deliver high-quality, affordable and healthy buildings