



## PRESS RELEASE

### Wide disparity of national nZEB standards undermines EU climate goals, finds BPIE

**Embargoed: Not for public release before 07:00 CEST, 23 June 2021**

**Brussels, 23 June 2021** – [A new review](#) of national nZEB (nearly zero-energy buildings) standards, released today by BPIE (Buildings Performance Institute Europe), finds a wide degree of disparity in how these are implemented across the EU-27, highlighting a misalignment with EU climate targets. Since the beginning of 2021, all new buildings constructed in the EU must be nearly zero-energy buildings (nZEBs), according to Article 9 of the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). The think tank underlines the urgency for nZEB standards to be thoroughly and ambitiously implemented at the national level, and for the Commission to ensure strengthened standards in legislative revisions, set for later this year.

BPIE identifies considerable disparity in definitions and metrics used to determine national nZEBs. There is also wide variation in Member States' calculation methodologies, required levels of energy performance to achieve nZEB status, and the extent to which residual energy requirements need to be covered by renewable energy. A number of Member States exceed the recommended benchmark to limit energy waste, while a small minority is more ambitious than EU recommendations.

National requirements for renewable energy in new buildings are even more diverse, often leaving room for use of considerable amounts of fossil fuels in new buildings. Current nZEB standards were in fact calculated a number of years before they became law for all buildings at the start of 2021. This means that they are not based on the latest cost data, which should today reflect significant reductions in costs of renewable energy.

[BPIE advises](#) that the re-opening of the EPBD legislative file provides an important opportunity for the European Commission to ensure that the methodology used to set nZEB requirements is updated and strengthened across Member States, and to introduce a new standard requiring all new buildings constructed as of 1 January, 2030 (the latest) to be positive energy/net-zero carbon over their lifecycle.

For their part, [Member States are advised](#) to implement the “energy efficiency first” principle<sup>1</sup> and correct their nZEB standards in terms of energy performance requirements in accordance with Commission benchmarks. Additionally, Member States must comply with requirements from the Governance Regulation to report progress (by March 2023) on implementation of nZEB standards in construction, and link this to the reporting on long-term renovation strategies. Finally, the transparency and availability of information about energy performance and renewable energy requirements and values for new buildings need to be improved.

“Strengthened national nZEB standards and rigorous implementation are a key ingredient to achieving Europe’s wider climate goals for 2030 and 2050, as well as increased comfort and well-being for occupants and long-term security for investors,” says Oliver Rapf, Executive Director of BPIE.

“The revision of the EPBD this year is an important opportunity not only to ensure that Member States are correctly implementing existing legislation, but also to set Europe on a trajectory to go beyond *nearly zero*, towards *positive energy* buildings by 2030, where new builds produce more energy than they consume.”

[Read the policy briefing](#)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1999&from=EN>



## **About BPIE**

BPIE (Buildings Performance Institute Europe) is a leading independent centre of expertise on energy performance of buildings, providing data-driven and actionable policy analysis, advice, and implementation support to decision-makers in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Founded in 2010, BPIE combines expertise on energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies, and health and indoor environment with a deep understanding of EU policies and processes. A not-for-profit think-tank based in Brussels and Berlin, our mission is to make an affordable, climate-neutral built environment a reality in Europe and globally.

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