PRESS RELEASE

On the plus side, we have a deal.

Brussels, 14 June 2012 – Today, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Members States have reached an agreement on the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), part of the EU’s effort to reach a target of 20 % of primary energy savings by 2020. This agreement will most likely be endorsed at tomorrow’s Energy Council. Although a deal on the Directive is positive, its ambition and proposed measures are underwhelming.

In the end, the Danes succeeded in closing a deal on the EED, and in the light of the negative predictions during the last week, this is quite an achievement. And, whilst it does not reach the level of ambition that both the European Parliament and the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA), amongst many others, had advocated would be necessary to reach the 20% primary energy savings target that the Council has signed up to itself, it does at least go some of the way. For instance, Articles 4 and 6 set binding targets for governments and energy retailers/distributors – and the impact hereof will be measurable.

Still, the EHPA cannot be completely satisfied with the outcome. As a representative of the European heat pump industry, we are, both from a growth and a climate protection perspective, convinced that improving energy efficiency is necessary for a sustainable, competitive Europe of the future. The current text, cautious as it is, will not free all the EU’s energy efficiency potential, and this is a real shame. Not least because ambition levels could easily have been raised without a negative impact on budgets by including reference to all efficient technologies when it comes to heating and cooling.

“A broader and more technology-neutral approach would have made it easier for Member States to reach more ambitious targets in a way that is appropriate to their particular national and geographical circumstances”, says Thomas Nowak, Secretary General of EHPA. Thus, rather than focusing primarily on large-scale heating and cooling applications, EHPA would have liked to see reference to small-scale solutions also, such as heat pumps. This would have given Member States the chance to take up the technology that would best fit their particular needs, based on a cost-benefit analysis, rather than being restricted to using certain, prescribed technologies.

“No-one can have missed the fact that Europe is going through a serious crisis at the moment. In such situations, you need all men on deck, not just a selected few. As EHPA, we will be working to ensure that the potential of the heat pump is not overlooked in any upcoming legislation on energy and environment issues. Europe simply cannot afford to miss out on what our technology has to offer if it is serious about an energy efficient future”.

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Note to the editor
The Brussels based European Heat Pump Association EEIG (EHPA) represents the majority of the European heat pump industry. It has currently 98 members from all parts of the industry's value chain: heat pump and component manufacturers, research institutes, universities, testing labs and energy agencies. Its key goal is to promote awareness and proper deployment of heat pump technology in the European market place for residential, commercial and industrial application. EHPA coordinates the European Quality label for heat pumps and the EUCERT education and training scheme for heat pump installers. It compiles the annual sales statistics and market outlook. For more information, please visit: www.ehpa.org.