

Flag-raising ceremony cancelled

Owing to road closure in Wan Chai, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square at 8am today (February 1) will be cancelled.

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (February 1) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

Energy efficient buildings: EU ambassadors endorse agreement

Press contacts

Katharina Pausch-Homblé

Press officer

+32 2 281 62 63

+32 470 88 42 96

Today, EU ambassadors confirmed the political agreement reached between the Estonian presidency and the European Parliament in December 2017 on the revised directive on the energy performance of buildings.

The directive will improve energy efficiency in buildings and **encourage building renovation**. Decarbonising the existing, highly inefficient European building stock is one of its long term goals. It promotes cost-effective renovation works, introduces a **smartness indicator for buildings**, simplifies the inspections of heating and air condition systems and also promotes **electro-mobility** by creating parking spaces for electric vehicles.

Buildings account for 40% of the total energy consumption in Europe. By improving the existing rules, taking advantage of recent technological

developments and encouraging further energy efficiency, the EU makes a major step towards fulfilling its 2020 and 2030 energy efficiency targets.

“Today we reached a major milestone for improving the energy efficiency of our citizens’ homes. The Bulgarian Presidency is pleased to arrive at this result on the directive on the energy performance of buildings, which is one of the priority items on the agenda of the Council. The ‘energy efficiency comes first’ principle is a key element of the Energy Union. Boosting the energy efficiency of buildings is one of the most effective ways of improving EU citizens’ quality of life, contributing to the achievement of a low-carbon economy, impacting economic growth, job creation and investments.”

Temenuzhka Petkova, Minister of Energy of the Republic of Bulgaria

The review of the energy performance of buildings directive amends Directive 2010/31/EU and it complements measures under the energy efficiency directive as well as EU legislation on energy efficiency of products. It is part of the **Clean Energy package** presented by the Commission on 30 November 2016.

The Council agreed on a negotiating position on the revised energy performance of buildings directive in June 2017. Negotiations with the European Parliament followed. Today’s decision confirms the provisional agreement reached on 19 December 2017 between the Estonian Presidency and European Parliament representatives.

After formal approval of the regulation by the Council and the Parliament, the directive will be published in the Official Journal of the EU, and it will enter into force twenty days later. The **transposition period** for this legislation is 20 months.

[Download as pdf](#)

[EU Youth Orchestra: a secure future following Council’s agreement on funding](#)

Press contacts

[Evi Liaskou](#)

Press officer
+32 2 281 52 72

+32 470 96 04 77

EU Youth Orchestra – bringing together the most talented young musicians

EU ambassadors today endorsed the provisional agreement reached with the European Parliament on 25 January on the financing of the European Union Youth Orchestra.

The future of the Youth Orchestra has been secured until the end of 2020 as a result of an agreement on funding which will come from the Creative Europe programme. As part of the deal, the orchestra will have to increase its efforts in areas such as audience development and visibility and to ensure geographically balanced representation of musicians as well as work with a view to reducing its dependence on Union funding.

The EU has ensured that the Youth Orchestra will remain among the best of its kind. It consists of outstanding and dedicated young musicians, conductors and soloists from across the EU , and is a source of pride for all of us.

Boil Banov, minister of culture of Bulgaria and the president of the Council

The Youth Orchestra was founded in 1976. It brings together talented young musicians from the whole of Europe, working to the very highest musical standards.

The Youth Orchestra has played a unique role in promoting intercultural dialogue, mutual respect and understanding through culture. It has performed in major cities and festivals in Europe and around the world, in a variety of formal and informal settings using traditional and innovative formats and techniques for a wide range of audiences.

Through its activities, it has acted as a cultural ambassador for the Union by showcasing the richness and diversity of European culture and emerging talent.

[Download as pdf](#)

[Our oceans are becoming a plastic soup](#)

The world's oceans are slowly turning into a plastic soup.

Unless we take action, plastic waste will continue to pollute our oceans with devastating effect.

We have all heard the reports of seabirds strangled by 6-pack rings and whales washing up with guts full of plastic, but **did you know the average seafood consumers eats around 11,000 plastic particles a year?**

Prawns with polystyrene anyone?

[Go to Source](#)

Author: