

Energy efficient buildings: EU ambassadors endorse agreement

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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.

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

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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.

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European Commission: public consultation to establish first worldwide 'Counterfeit and Piracy watch list'

The aim is to identify the marketplaces outside the EU where counterfeiting, piracy or other forms of intellectual property abuse are common practice. The initiative is part of the Commission's strategy announced in the 2017 Communication '[A balanced Intellectual Property enforcement system responding to today's societal challenges](#)'. Based on stakeholders' input, the future watch list will help to raise awareness of consumers that might be buying products in those marketplaces, and encourage their operators and owners to crack down on intellectual property abuse.

The Commission will also monitor the measures taken by local authorities to reduce the availability of goods and services infringing intellectual property rights in identified markets.

Intellectual property infringement is a particular scourge on European industry and hampers investment and employment in industries that rely on creativity and innovation. According to the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the OECD, trade in counterfeit and pirated products amounts to around EUR 338 billion worldwide. The European Union is

particularly affected, with counterfeit and pirated products amounting up to around 5 % of all imports or as much as EUR 85 billion a year.

Contributions to the public consultation should be sent before 31 March 2018.

[Public consultation on EU Survey](#)
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