en

Publication | 10.02.2006

Housing

Today 40% of the EU energy use is in the housing sector, most of it based on fossil fuel consumption, with 20% coming from oil.
Europe has an innovation gap in this sector!
It is technically proven that :

- **new houses** can be designed in a way that greatly **reduces the need for heating and cooling**
- the energy needed to deliver heating and colling are law temperature needs (40 to 80° C). This energy can be easily covered by renewables (like solar, geothermal or biomass)

However most of the new build and the vast majority of the existing building stock does not make the most of modern technology.How can we change this?

The Greens propose an **action plan** that would:
 Enhance energy efficiency in existing buildings with credit support for reconstruction programmes that enhance insulation and use of renewables. Thousands of passive energy houses are completing this effort. There is neither technical nor financial argument not to gradually impose both for new housing and office building these stringent standards.

More than 100.000 houses in the EU with low energy standard have been completed at additional costs of 3-5% of total building cost mainly in Germany, Sweden and Austria. The refitting of the existing building stock is the single most job-intensive and CO2-reducing measure to be undertaken in the EU, estimated to create 400,000 new jobs in EU-15 alone!

 Support innovative architecture with modern construction and energy technologies (Low energy houses). Technically, today, we are able to build houses which produce more energy than they consume (Plus Energy Houses). Develop also bonus systems for cogeneration, biomass, solar thermal power, solar heating and cooling, solar photovoltaic electricity

Near Freiburg, in Germany, houses that are producing more energy over a year's time than they use have been built. The standards for new buildings have been reduced over the last 20 years from above 150 W/m2 to 10 W/m2 (passive energy standards).This has enormous potential for consumers: in Germany, 50% of the buildings will be renovated within the next 20 years (950,000 apartments per year)

 Introduce labels or "energy passes" for buildings.
These could be a useful instrument to enhance consumers' information and awareness and could supply incentives to buy or rent buildings/apartments with lower energy consumption

 Set up an EU financing scheme for refitting the existing EU building stock
Put the European Investment Bank (EIB) in charge of the supply of funding schemes and cheap credit. The

existing building stock is a "gold" mine for jobs, quality of living and CO2 reduction for which we need a specific budget line. The EIB is probably the most adequate institution to open such a special budget line

 Follow up the EU Directive on energy performance of buildings. This could also be used in member states to renew the system of 'feed-in remuneration' in a way that supports renewable energies

 Bring in Green public procurement to enhance the energy performance of public buildings

 Coordinate European policy in the building sector to trigger growth and employment. Instead of sending billions of Euro outside Europe to pay for oil and gas these large sums would be invested in European manpower and technology, thus giving a push to EU's economy while reducing the overall energy costs in the long run

Mitigation of CO2 emissions from building stock (pdf)

European Alliance of Companies for Energy Efficiency in Buildings

European Insulation Manufacturers Association

Recommended

Publication



Call for tenders: Greens/EFA Consultation widget

18.10.2026

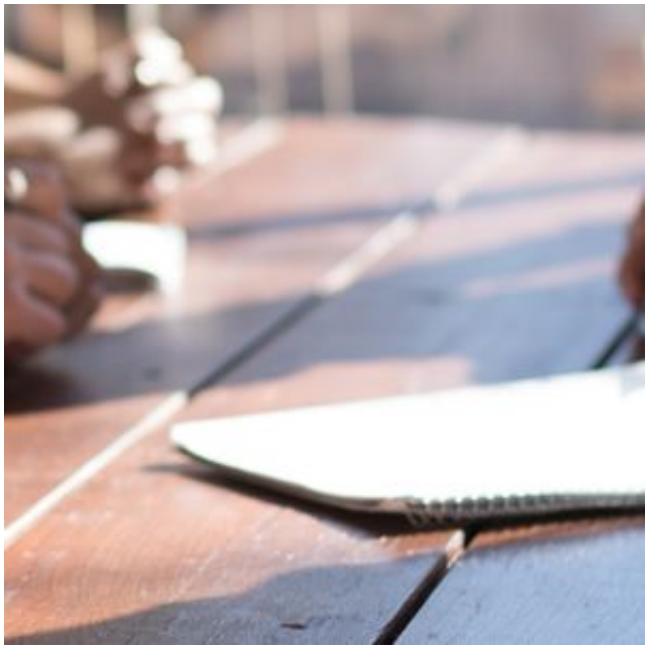
Publication



Call for tenders: The Greens/EFA CRM Software

08.10.2026

Publication



Human Resources Management System

02.10.2025

Publication



Heads of national delegations in the GREENS/EFA Group

11.03.2025

Please share

- E-Mail