

Press Release

EU building directive overburdens industry

Berlin, 15.12.2021 – The German Property Federation ZIA, umbrella organisation of the German real estate industry, sees problems in the draft amendment of the EU Buildings Directive (EPBD) presented today as part of the Fit for 55 package. "The proposed introduction of mandatory minimum standards for the most energy inefficient buildings is a reasonable approach. However, the design requires detailed examination and impact assessment. Such requirements must not lead to unwanted bans on sales or leasing, in which case the market comes to a standstill," says Maria Hill, Chair of the ZIA's Energy and Building Technology Committee.

Due to their heterogeneity, non-residential buildings should also be divided more specifically according to corresponding use classes; this is the only way to reflect the diversity of non-residential buildings in particular. "Single-family homes, hotels, restaurants, retail properties, hospitals or logistics centers each have entirely different energy profiles and requirements and must therefore be evaluated in a differentiated manner," says Hill. The ZIA has already developed a classification of asset categories that could be used as a basis for the EPBD amendment.

Meanwhile, ZIA takes a positive view of the Commission's intention to establish building databases in the individual member states. "This will allow us to close important data gaps," Hill says. "Energy demand and the CO₂ emissions of the building stock will thus become transparent and comparable - within a country as well as across borders."

The real estate industry is aware of its responsibility regarding adequate social and climate policies arising from the EU Green Deal, among other things. "We share the goal of a climate-neutral building stock in 2045 in Germany and 2050 in the EU," Hill

underlines. "Our member companies invest immense sums every year to achieve this." With success: since 1990, building emissions in Germany have already been reduced by more than 40 percent. However, the 55 percent climate target by 2030 can only be achieved with massive investment in existing buildings.

Moreover, the goal of a climate-neutral building stock can only be achieved if sufficient skilled workers are also available and building materials are available in sufficient quantities and at affordable prices. The shortage of materials is having a significant impact on construction prices. The general increase in construction costs in 2021 was already around 14 to 17 percent. This needs to be remedied. In addition, doubling the renovation rate from one to two percent in the short term requires about 350,000 additional skilled workers and 62 billion euros in construction volume. A complete transformation of the national building stock by 2045 would require a refurbishment rate of up to four percent - so the challenges are enormous. A training offensive for craftsmen and engineers is needed as quickly as possible.

The EU should also focus more on the concept of neighborhoods. The fact that the Commission wants to examine the effects of neighborhood approaches under Article 25 is an important step, but one that should not wait until the end of 2027 - the appropriate concepts are available and must be implemented as quickly as possible.

Therefore, Hill underlines, there is a need for simplification of the specifications instead of more bureaucracy. "We look forward to continuing our ongoing exchange with the European institutions". "We will support the EU with all our members' and our own expertise to ensure the greatest possible practicability in the design of the European legal framework."

The asset category classification can be found at this [LINK](#).

Der ZIA

The ZIA German Property Federation (ZIA) is the leading umbrella association for the property sector. With its registered office in Berlin and a European office in Brussels, it speaks through its more than 300 members, including 28 associations, on behalf of approximately 37,000 industry companies right across the value chain. The ZIA provides comprehensive, unified representation for the interests of the real estate sector in all its diversity at both national and European level, including as a member of the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and the German Economic Institute (IW). The President of the association is Dr Andreas Mattner.

Kontakt

André Hentz

ZIA Zentraler Immobilien Ausschuss e.V.

Leipziger Platz 9

10117 Berlin

Tel.: 030/20 21 585 23

E-Mail: andre.hentz@zia-deutschland.de

Internet: www.zia-deutschland.de



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