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Committee on Regional Development

2008/2214(INI)

5.12.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on the follow-up of the energy efficiency national action plans : a first
assessment
(2008/2214(INI))

Rapporteur: Emanuel Jardim Fernandes

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Highlights the significant potential for energy efficiency across a broad range of sectors; stresses that only through higher technological innovation and the adoption of a holistic, coordinated approach involving local, regional, national and Community policies can a visionary, long-term strategy ensuring consistency between projects and producing the best results be implemented;
2. Underlines the fact that energy efficiency needs to be treated as an European and global priority, taking into consideration the increases in the global demand for energy, the rising prices of oil and gas and the impact of climate change;
3. Stresses the relationship between energy and territorial cohesion, as pointed out by the Green Paper on territorial cohesion, in terms of both the positive contribution of energy efficiency measures to sustainable development, energy security, the importance of a well-designed spatial strategy and the creation of long-term solutions for all regions;
4. Calls on the Commission to work together with the Member States and other relevant actors in the framework of the energy efficiency national plans in order to ensure that, when presenting measures that should ensure greater energy efficiency, adequate attention is paid to responding to the specific characteristics and challenges of all regions, including island, mountainous and outermost regions and the regions of the new Member States;
5. Notes with regret that in most Member States the funding allocated to energy-related projects, in particular energy efficiency projects, is still insufficient and fails to adequately account for regional variances; given that cohesion policy offers a framework for financing projects relating to energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy and also energy infrastructure, calls on Member States and regions to focus in the implementation of their respective operational programmes on innovative measures in order to develop cost-effective energy efficiency solutions; stresses that the private sector, supported by national measures, should play a more prominent role in investing in and developing new, sustainable energy technologies, while also taking innovative actions to adopt an approach more focussed on energy efficiency; believes that this can only bring about a win-win situation for both the public and the private sector;
6. Encourages Member States to make substantial use of alternative renewable energy sources such as wind, biomass, bio fuels and also wave and tidal energy, where possible;
7. Calls on the Member States to develop long-term energy efficiency awareness campaigns, focussing on efficiency in buildings, both public and private and also on convincing the public that energy efficiency can bring them real savings; also invites the Commission, the Member States and the regions to encourage the deployment of national and regional programmes to develop mechanisms stimulating Structural Funds

investment both in multi-family and social housing sectors and in innovation and research projects for energy efficiency and energy service companies in order to promote green technologies and local sustainable economic development;

8. Encourages in particular Member States and the regions to use Structural funds to set up on their territories thematic networks in the framework of the Concerted Action provided for by the 2008 Intelligent Energy Europe Work Programme in order to be informed about practices of other EU regions as regards the efficient use of energy and to exchange know-how and experience in this domain;
9. Asks the Commission for the next programming period of the Structural Funds to support energy-efficiency objectives, to reinforce priority criteria related to them and to support the implementation of concrete measures and technologies for saving energy and fostering its efficient use, including through the promotion of partnerships, in projects such as renovating buildings, modernising street illumination and ecological transport, modernising installations for urban heating and producing heating and electricity;
10. Stresses the strategic role of EU public authorities, in particular at regional and local level, in strengthening the implementation of the necessary institutional support for energy-efficiency initiatives, as described in Directive 2006/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2006 on energy end-use efficiency and energy services; recommends the strengthening of capillary information and education campaigns, for example through the use of easily understandable energy efficiency labels, and of energy-related pilot initiatives and training on the territories of those regional and local authorities aiming at raising citizens' awareness and changing behaviour;
11. Highlights the key role of the transport sector in reducing energy consumption and promoting energy efficiency;
12. Considers that public authorities at all levels, according to their financial circumstances, should be the first to set an example through the use of energy-efficient equipment on their premises, the implementation of Green Public Procurement into their procedures and the promotion of energy-saving practices in their daily activities.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	2.12.2008
Result of final vote	+: 41 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Emmanouil Angelakas, Stavros Arnaoutakis, Jana Bobošíková, Wolfgang Bulfon, Giorgio Carollo, Antonio De Blasio, Bairbre de Brún, Petru Filip, Gerardo Galeote, Eugenijus Gentvilas, Monica Giuntini, Ambroise Guellec, Marian Harkin, Jim Higgins, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Gisela Kallenbach, Tunne Kelam, Evgeni Kirilov, Miloš Koterec, Constanze Angela Krehl, Florencio Luque Aguilar, Jamila Madeira, James Nicholson, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Maria Petre, Wojciech Roszkowski, Grażyna Staniszevska, Catherine Stihler, Margie Sudre, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Oldřich Vlasák
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Brigitte Douay, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Samuli Pohjamo, Jürgen Schröder, Bart Staes, László Surján, Iuliu Winkler