

WRITTEN QUESTION P-4749/07
by Anne Ferreira (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Rejection of measures to improve energy performance in housing introduced in French Regional Operational Programmes

The fact that the European Commission attaches great importance to energy efficiency is clear from its cohesion policy, and in particular Articles 4 and 5 of the ERDF Regulation.

However, all the regions in the old Member States which have adopted measures to improve energy performance in buildings for residential use are gradually being forced to drop these from their operational programmes.

To justify this ineligibility, DG Regio applies a narrow interpretation of the ERDF Regulation (Article 7), taking the view that this will enable the ERDF to intervene to improve energy performance in buildings other than those used for residential purposes. Measures to improve energy efficiency in residential buildings could, however, still be supported as long as the boilers were installed outside the buildings.

Is it not possible for the Commission to have a position consistent with European energy policy that results in energy investment in residential buildings becoming eligible – on an equal footing with other buildings in all Member States – whilst excluding all expenditure undertaken inside the residential units themselves, and in private and independent dwellings, in line with Article 7 of the ERDF Directive?

Does this decision to withdraw energy efficiency measures in buildings for residential use not constitute a discriminatory measure vis-à-vis the housing sector?

This decision runs counter to the energy policy priorities and challenges of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and combating climate change, given that the residential sector is a priority of such policies.

If it is not going to reconsider this decision, would the Commission state the means and measures it intends to adopt in order to attain its objectives in the area of energy efficiency in housing?