

OPED : Making the Renovation Wave a Success Adrian JOYCE, Secretary General



The *European Green Deal* (EGD) contains a proposal to launch a *Renovation Wave* across the EU, which is strongly supported by EuroACE. We interpret its inclusion in the EGD as a sure sign that the role of buildings in contributing to a climate neutral economy has been recognised at the highest political level. The challenge now will be to ensure that it will be a success and that it will have the expected positive effects on improving the lives of millions of EU citizens and in underpinning the economy for years to come.

During its operational phase, the building stock in the EU consumes about 40% of all primary energy and, as a result, emits over 36% of energy-related CO₂ emissions. To achieve climate neutrality in the EU, it is essential to tackle this high impact and transform our building stock to being highly energy efficient and decarbonised.

The Member States of the EU have a special responsibility, under the recently revised Buildings Directive, to prepare long-term renovation strategies (LTRS) that will achieve this transformation. The deadline for the submission of those strategies to the European Commission for scrutiny was the 10th March and early indications are that many Member States have, by the end of March, met the requirement. However, we do not yet have any indication as to whether the quality of those strategies is enough to put the building stock on the right trajectory.

This is where the proposed *Renovation Wave* enters and finds its place in the policy and legislative framework of the EU. The European Commission has announced that the Strategic Communication on the *Renovation Wave* will be based on an analysis of submitted LTRS, giving it the opportunity to fill any gaps in those strategies with legislative and non-legislative elements in the *Renovation Wave*.

Many stakeholders are watching this process closely and perhaps none more so than the [Renovate Europe Campaign](#) (REC), which is run by EuroACE. It is a political communications campaign that was launched in 2011 and that enjoys the support of 38 partners, including partners from 14 Member States. In addition, the REC has [41 Champions Together for Renovation](#) including MEPs (drawn from 5 political groups and 13 Member States) as well as three cities.



The partners of the REC have been thinking how to ensure that the *Renovation Wave* will be a success and have published, this week, a [short paper](#) containing **10 Principles** on which it recommends the European Commission bases its Strategic Communication. The REC also calls on policy-makers at all levels of governance to take account of the principles when they are preparing sister strategies at regional, city or local levels.

The principles advise, *inter alia*, to:

- put energy efficiency first to ensure actual energy consumption is reduced
- scale up good practices
- consider specific building typologies and ownership models
- engage meaningfully with stakeholders in devising and implementing deep energy renovation programmes
- ensure that the right number of pertinently qualified workers (all along the value chain) are drawn into the sector and
- make tailored financing more widely available

EuroACE, for its part, is organising a series of mini webinars on three key aspects of the *Renovation Wave*:

- Should we adopt a segment-based or area-based approach?
- Financing energy efficiency and energy renovations
- The renovation wave ecosystem: what policies and measures, and what links to other initiatives?



These webinars are drawing a diverse and expert audience and are stimulating a good debate which gives more ideas about what the *Renovation Wave* should be. All webinars are recorded and those recordings can be viewed online: [here for the first one](#), [here for the second one](#).

A second destination for our deliberations is the European Parliament where work on an own-initiative report on *Maximising the energy efficiency potential of the EU building stock* is underway. The report is being prepared by Ciaran CUFFE (Greens, IE), and will set out the view of the Parliament on most aspects of energy efficiency in buildings. It will also be making concrete suggestions for the content of the *Renovation Wave* that EuroACE expects will influence the thinking of the European Commission.

There is much hope being placed in the concept of the *Renovation Wave* and its role in significantly helping to achieve climate neutrality in the EU. That role will be amplified by the need to boost the economy in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis that we are all living through.

The deliberations on what shape the recovery package should take is just getting underway, but here at EuroACE we have no doubt that it must be designed in the framework of the EU Green Deal and that it will not bring the kind of rapid recovery that we all wish to see unless the *Renovation Wave* is a success from the very first day!

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Picture 1: Skitterphoto on [Pexels.com](#)

Picture 2: Pixabay on [Pexels.com](#)

Picture 3: Pixabay on [Pexels.com](#)

For further information

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About EuroACE

EuroACE represents Europe's leading companies involved with the manufacture, distribution and installation of energy saving goods and services for buildings. EuroACE members employ around 200,000 people in these activities in Europe and have around 900 production facilities and office locations. The mission of EuroACE is to work together with the EU institutions to help Europe move towards a more efficient use of energy in buildings, thereby contributing to Europe's commitments on climate change, energy security and economic growth.

EuroACE Members (2020)

