

eu.bac 20-year anniversary - looking back on the panel discussion “Bringing the EPBD home”.

Last week, eu.bac hosted an event celebrating its 20 years at The Hotel in Brussels. The event was a success, with a great turnout, insightful discussions and experts enlightening the energy community in Brussels. Here are a few major takeaways from the panel.



From Left to Right: Ms Corlouer, Mr Joyce, Mr Smid, Mr Stamatoukos, Mr Baynes and Dr Hug

Regarding the latest news on the EPBD, Mr Baynes assured the Parliament had secured great wins for building automation and control systems during past trilogues. However, some critical areas of the Directive are still open for negotiation, such as solar in public buildings and Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS). Nevertheless, an approach to MEPS was agreed upon whereby broad flexibility and leeway for Member States would be allowed under the condition that the overall ambition level on building renovation does not fall behind the initial Commission proposal. The percentage of overall efficiency gain targets shall be discussed during the next trilogue. Finally, Mr Baynes noted that the next trilogue on 7 December should be the last, promising an encouraging timeline for the Directive to enter into force before the elections next year.



“On BACS, over the past three months, we have secured good language, and we are happy to move forward with that” Mr Baynes

Experts then also discussed the question of data exchange, a significant aspect for eu.bac in the revised EPBD. Dr Hug pointed out that the industry was alarmed by the Commission's proposed wording, which seemed not to acknowledge that data storage, protection and management incur costs. The suggestion that data should be made available to everyone for free can prove to be an impossible burden to businesses. Mr Stamatoukos noted that data is everywhere in the value chain; therefore, we must find ways to utilise it better. At the same time, he acknowledged that care must be taken to protect the businesses' intellectual property. The panel also discussed the Data Act, an overarching cross-sectoral regulatory framework, and potential legislative overlaps with the EPBD. Mr Baynes noted that stakeholders at the institutional level would deal with this issue at the technical meeting on 8 November.

“We need to distinguish between raw and processed data, which are intellectual property and create value around that data. Raw data is a compromise whereas processed data cannot be for free because it requires money, tools and expertise to produce it” Mr Stamatoukos

Another emerging topic throughout the panel concerned the low and disparate implementation at the Member State level. In that vein, Mr Joyce insisted that the sector has high hopes to see a form of mandatory renovation that is properly framed with appropriate conditions and social safeguards so that it becomes possible for building owners because if it is not designed in a way that is attractive to them, the transition will not happen.

“Having the right set of measures that go together, for the envelope, for the equipment, and for the controls is more crucial than ever. Therefore, we must be working together for an ambitious implementation.” Mr Joyce



"If we have a working BACS system, you can save between 25% and 50% of energy consumption, depending on the application. Therefore, it is important to remember that BACS are the crucial first for any renovation. It's proven and cost-effective technology" Mr Smid

Finally, the panel looked at the case study of France. Ms Corlouer explained that the energy transition had become a priority for France. She insisted that they considered BACS as key elements in that transition because they allow quick energy gains with reasonable costs. Therefore, they are going beyond the current EPBD scope, extending it to smaller non-residential buildings. In France, they try to put the owners at the centre of the regulation by trusting them to install the BACS and to lead in ensuring compliance.

Furthermore, they have defined that BACS are economically feasible, wherever their payback time is under ten years. Mr Smid concurred, saying that eu.bac believes this is a notable example of how other Member States could ensure that the economic feasibility exemption is not used as a loophole by defining it in the national legislation. He also highlighted the examples of Portugal using the EN ISO 52120 standard class B as a reference for the EPBD BACS capabilities to ensure stakeholders understand how to implement the requirement properly. Finally, he noted the excellent example of the Netherlands, a useful checklist for the capabilities to make it clear to everyone what is required.

"We aimed to reduce our energy consumption by 10% by 2024. To do that, in 2022, we identified the BACS as the key element to achieve our goals because they allow quick energy gains with minimal costs" Ms Corlouer

The panel concluded with everyone agreeing that more must be done with the whole energy community acting together, putting our differences aside in supporting Member States to implement EPBD ambitiously and reaching the EU's decarbonisation goals. The panel discussion was followed by a standing dinner, allowing the eclectic cast of attendees to exchange and network.

