

Excerpts from the speech by Monica Frassoni at
EASAC : Decarbonisation of buildings for climate, health and jobs

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- The holistic approach of the study is great. There is no silver bullet for the decarbonization of buildings. We need several approaches and to enhance the use of existing technologies. There is no time to invest in uncertain technologies. Efficiency measures in industry, buildings, appliances and transport already exist and can be put into effect and scaled up very quickly.
- Energy Efficiency is an existing and certain technology. Energy Efficiency, intended as reducing energy demand and optimising consumption, is recognized but we didn't notice anywhere in the report the specific reference to make "Energy Efficiency First" principle (EE1) a pillar of the EU future energy system.
- The EE1 is needed to get all the non-energy related benefits of decarbonizing buildings, to alleviate energy poverty, to correctly size the RES supply required to match buildings residual energy demand, to improve the flexibility of buildings and their capacity to store energy, to phase out fossil fuels and avoid stranded assets as well as increase our energy security); The EE1 is instrumental to energy system integration and finally the principle is a driver for energy, resource/material efficiency and full application of circularity principle.
- We emphasize on EE1 because energy efficiency is expected to play the largest part in curbing energy demand and emissions in the period to 2030 (IEA "Net Zero by 2050", 2021).
- From a business perspective, the Renovation Wave is a clear win-win for European businesses. As businesses and investors having energy efficiency and energy demand reduction at the heart of our activities, we know that investing in the ambitious renovation of the European building stock will help maintain and strengthen the competitive advantage of a broad range of innovative companies while supporting the local construction value chain.
- I took good note that the number of new jobs in the building industry that could result from the proposed Renovation Wave would almost double the existing building workforce of 3.4 million workers. This will be a powerful argument for the revisions of key directives such as EED and EPBD.
- Talking of directives to be revised, the revision of the EPBD is a unique opportunity to increase energy savings, optimise energy consumption and reduce GHG emissions from the buildings sector. I am happy to see that many aspects covered in this report could easily be reflected in the legislative proposals that will be coming up in the next weeks and months.
- We appreciate calls in the report:
 - Phasing out fossil fuels;
 - "Positive energy buildings" producing more energy than the one they need;
 - Buildings as infrastructures and their role stabilise the grids by storing energy when there is a surplus (of RES) and delivering it when needed, avoiding energy pics which in the end represent higher costs for consumers;
 - Buildings and system integration (with industry and transports) thanks to digitalization;
 - Promoting one-stop-shops and go beyond to promote a more coordinated and systemic technical assistance in the EU and across Member States.
- Last remark is about Minimum Energy Performance Standards. They are a policy measure that should be prioritized in the EPBD. They send a clear signal to owners and investors and this is something that the EU can easily implement when revising the EPBD.