

## Energy efficiency: Binding targets will hinder EU growth

Written by Markus Pieper on 3 May 2016 in Opinion  
Opinion

Member states are best placed to decide the energy efficiency measures that best fit their national circumstances and needs, argues Markus Pieper.



This autumn, the European Commission is planning a revision to the energy efficiency directive. Both the Commission and Parliament are currently evaluating the implementation of the existing directive, originally adopted back in 2012. The best word to describe how the directive has been implemented by EU member states is probably 'inadequately'.

However, the good news is that the European Union will still meet its 2020 climate goals. Businesses and private individuals are interested in using less energy and saving money. I regard it as unnecessary to force behaviour artificially in a market that already provides its own stimulation.

The directive currently allows for flexibility in its implementation. This has helped those member states that have not yet done a great deal in the area of energy efficiency measures to begin promoting efficiency. Instead of an energy-saving obligation scheme, many countries have used alternative approaches, such as tax relief or funding schemes tailored to the needs of their national

situations.

---

## RELATED CONTENT

- [Petras Auštrevičius: Nord Stream 2 pipeline would defeat purpose of Energy Union](#) [1]
  - [Maroš Šefčovič: Energy union set to empower EU's energy security](#) [2]
  - [Energy efficiency: EU needs to 'think bigger'](#) [3]
  - [Theresa Griffin: EU needs strong safeguards to maintain energy security](#) [4]
  - [Jerzy Buzek: EU needs new approach to gas energy supply security](#) [5]
- 

My aim is to safeguard this flexibility and that is why I reject any binding reduction targets for the future. Binding targets and energy-saving obligations will hinder growth and put needless strains on Europe's small businesses.

I am worried that European energy legislation is already far too complicated and fragmented, leading to mutual obstruction among laws and massive reporting obligations. Energy efficiency measures interfere with the ETS certificate system and at the same time demand energy savings even in the case of renewable energies; this makes no sense to me.

There are already approximately 2000 EU and national reporting requirements in the energy sector. Ultimately, it is customers who will end up paying for all this red tape. European electricity prices are among the highest in the world, inhibiting industry competitiveness and pushing private customers towards energy poverty.

Among the root causes of this situation are issues such as competing climate protection legislation, the complexity associated with energy efficiency legislation and unilateral national energy policies.

Uncoordinated national legislation often hinders those energy efficiency solutions that offer the best possible results in terms of cost-effectiveness. I am therefore asking for greater consistency and flexibility across energy policies. A common framework is needed for energy policy as a whole.

Frans Timmermans, the EU's Better Regulation Commissioner, has been tasked with examining the extent to which competing or overlapping energy legislation leads to legislative ineffectiveness. Putting provisions such as metering and billing together in one legislative setting would be an example of good practice.

I am convinced that to achieve the EU's climate protection and efficiency goals, what is needed is greater flexibility and less obligation.

One of my ideas is to propose rebates for meeting energy-saving targets or expanding renewable energy where other targets, such as carbon dioxide emissions, have been exceeded. Reporting schemes and quantifiable measures also need to be aligned to allow for effective comparison between member states.

Ultimately, however, the choice of measures should always rest with national governments so they can choose the ones that best fit their specific national circumstances and needs.

## About the author

Markus Pieper (EPP, DE) is Parliament's rapporteur on the implementation report on the energy efficiency directive

## Tags

[Energy](#) [6]

## Categories

[Energy](#) [7]



Parliament Magazine is a Dods Group plc title

---

## Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [Climate Crisis](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

## Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)  
[MonitoringDods](#)  
[ResearchDods](#)  
[EventsDods](#)  
[Training](#)

## Media & publishing titles

[Politics HomeThe](#)  
[HouseThe](#)  
[Parliament](#)  
[MagazineHolyrood](#)  
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)  
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)  
[Service](#)  
[World](#)

[PublicTechnology](#)  
[Training](#)  
[JournalDods](#)  
[Parliamentary](#)  
[CompanionVacher's](#)  
[Quarterly The](#)  
[European Union and](#)  
[Public Affairs](#)  
[Directory](#)

### **Dods events**

[Westminster](#)  
[BriefingDigital](#)  
[Health & Care](#)  
[ScotlandMEP](#)  
[AwardsThe Skills](#)  
[SummitScottish](#)  
[Public Service](#)  
[AwardsPublic Sector](#)  
[Procurement](#)  
[SummitPublic](#)  
[Sector ICT](#)  
[SummitCyber](#)  
[Security](#)  
[SummitCyber](#)  
[Security](#)  
[2017Training](#)  
[Journal Awards](#)

### **Partnership events**

[The Health and](#)  
[Care Innovation](#)  
[ExpoCivil Service](#)  
[LiveCivil Service](#)  
[AwardsChief](#)  
[Nursing Officer for](#)  
[England's](#)  
[SummitWomen into](#)  
[LeadershipThe](#)  
[Youth Justice](#)  
[ConventionSocitm](#)  
[Spring](#)  
[ConferenceNHSCC](#)  
[Annual Members'](#)  
[EventDods at Party](#)  
[Conference](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/energy-efficiency-binding-targets-will-hinder-eu-growth>

**Links**

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/nord-stream-2-pipeline-would-defeat-purpose-energy-union>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/energy-union-set-empower-eus-energy-security>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/energy-efficiency-eu-needs-think-bigger>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/eu-needs-strong-safeguards-maintain-energy-security>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/eu-needs-new-approach-gas-energy-supply-security>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/energy>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/energy>