



GLASS FOR EUROPE

Europe's Manufacturers of Building, Automotive and Transport Glass

Press Luncheon for Launch of Solar Control Glass Study

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Windows of Opportunity in Fighting Climate Change

*Speech by **Fiona Hall** Member of the European Parliament,
Rapporteur for the Energy Efficiency Action Plan*

Last time I spoke at a glass industry meeting was at the Glass Performance days in Tampere in June.

I spoke about the EU Action Plan on energy efficiency published last October and what it could mean for the for the glass industry.

The EU Action Plan rightly acknowledges the need for new buildings to have much higher energy efficiency standards and also for existing buildings to be upgraded to higher standards.

Specifically, the Action Plan calls for minimum performance requirements not only for buildings but also for building components such as windows.

That is an acknowledgement of the central role that energy-efficiency windows can play in improving the overall efficiency of both new and existing buildings. And solar control glass opens up a whole new dimension within that.

I'm the rapporteur for the European Parliament's report on this EU Action Plan.

I am trying to use the Parliament's report to achieve two goals in particular.

One is to call for targets which are tighter and more specific.



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So I am suggesting for example that the revision of the European Performance in Buildings Directive (EPBD) should include the abolition of the 1000m² threshold for buildings requiring heating or cooling.

The second thing that I want the Parliament's report to do is to put under the spotlight the very poor level of implementation of current energy efficiency legislation.

Theoretically, the key tools are already in the toolbox for the delivery of the Action Plan's 20% by 2020 energy efficiency target. But the practice has been a different matter.

Very few countries have fully implemented the EPBD.

The National Energy Efficiency Action Plans (NEEAPs) binding requirement of the 2006 Energy End Use Efficiency Directive should have been submitted by 30th June. But by 1st September the Commission had received only 9.

The Commission was supposed to be taking on at least 20 new staff but haven't. So perhaps it is not surprising that by 1st September of 21 Commission actions scheduled in the Action Plan for completion in 2007 only 3 had been fully carried out.

So my draft of the Parliament's report was very frank in its criticism of both the Commission and member states for not doing more to implement existing energy efficiency legislation on which of course the proposed new measures build.

The Parliament has not yet voted on the report but the reaction of colleagues has been very supportive.

It is unusual for Parliament to be so critical and the Commission has been stung into action.

Commissioner Andris Piebalgs wrote recently to the Chair of the ITRE committee, Angelika Niebler, with an update.

There has been amazing progress in the last two months!

He says that 15 member states have now submitted their actions plans.

A total of 59 infringement procedures have been initiated concerning the EPBD, the NEEAPs and energy-using products.

16 out of the 21 actions scheduled for 2007 are now well on track.

I understand that the Commission has also made an announcement that they are considering setting up an eco-rating system for different types of window fittings.



So there is a sense of progress in the last few weeks, a sense that the legislative process on energy efficiency is getting unjammed and can start to function like it should.

But legislation isn't the whole story. There is a lot more to be done market-based measures too.

I calling in my report for more money from structural and cohesion funding to be spent on improving energy efficiency of existing homes for micro businesses to be treated like domestic households and offered very simple financing for energy efficiency improvements, and for the Council to agree to the removal in all Member States of value added tax on energy efficient materials and components.

There is also the international dimension. I heard at the Glass Performance Days in Tampere how different industry standards caused confusion in countries like China. The Commissioner has just announced an International Platform on Energy Efficiency will address the issue of benchmarking and common standards.

So in the last few months there has been some real action on energy efficiency not just words.

And its real action - things like eliminating the need for air-conditioning by getting high performance glass into as many buildings as possible - which are going to deliver the 20% by 2020 target with all that means in terms of us taking control on climate change.