

Overview and assessment of new and innovative integrated policy sets that aim at the nZEB standard

- ENTRANZE Report 2013 -

In the context in which the building sector holds a considerable potential for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, governments still encounter difficulties in identifying paths that comply with the long-term targets. This report provides a comprehensive list of a variety of policy instrument options promoting modernisation measures in the building sector. These instruments distinguish themselves by how they address target-group specific barriers in the built environment.

The instruments in question cover insulation measures for the building envelope or aim at increasing the efficiency, or incentivising the use of renewable energy (RES-H/C), in heating and cooling systems. The study puts the spotlight on instruments that aim at triggering ambitious refurbishment measures that can slash energy use in the building stock.

Moreover, different approaches are being considered as well as the advantages and drawbacks of these instruments. While the study introduces instruments which need to be regarded as generic concepts, it also considers the variables (the market maturity of different technologies, the stimulation and assurance of ambitious technological standards, limited resources...) specific to each national context. It is imperative to allow some leeway for adaptation at the implementation stage.

The study also dives into a broad spectrum of different policy approaches ranging from regulatory measures and economic incentives to “soft” policy instruments. Innovative measures are highlighted – such as instruments which mobilise alternative funding sources – in order to broaden our perspective and enrich the schemes in place. The economic approaches developed in the study distinguish between two very important elements, namely the revenue perspective (i.e. how to raise the money required for supporting building refurbishment and RES-H/C) and the support perspective (i.e. how different measures should be supported for different target groups or how organisational issues should be addressed).

There is nothing like an “optimum” policy instrument. The region’s specific, cultural and historic tradition has to be taken into account. Moreover, mostly it is not the decision in favour or against a certain policy instrument that matters. Rather, it is the specific design of policy instruments and applicability in a particular market context. The report discusses the huge variety of different instruments and their design options.

The mixed approach which combines different target-group specific instruments is the recommended path when dealing with a multitude of barriers at the same time. To put this simply, there is a call for target-specific instrument bundles (policy packages). But in order to achieve this, a series of considerations have to be taken into account. For instance, instruments should be designed in such a way that they address the main barriers which hinder energy investments in buildings. Plus, the policy packages should include elements that target the needs of major concerned groups. As for the instruments, these should be conceived in a way that reflects the market maturity of the different technologies. The study goes much deeper into these matters and offers a comprehensive overview and assessment of innovative integrated policy sets.

The report is available on the ENTRANZE website at www.entranze.eu