

Doc. 11167
30 January 2007

Towards sustainable development in the building sector

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Platvoet and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

The building sector is responsible for about 30% of primary energy use in OECD countries. This sector has a major impact not only on economic and social activities but also on the natural and built environment as well as on CO₂ emissions and their impact on climate change.

The way in which houses and other buildings are constructed can be significantly modified in order to reduce CO₂ emissions, by the use, for example, of sustainable building materials, new building technologies (e.g. better insulation), the integration of sources of renewable energy within the energy system (e.g. solar energy to produce electricity and hot water), intelligent systems to reduce the use of water, etc.

The promotion and implementation of environmentally-friendly technologies in the fields of building and housing therefore deserves special attention.

In September 2000, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The goal of ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG7) includes, amongst other specific targets, the integration of sustainable development principles into country policies and programmes and reversal of the loss of environmental resources.

The Parliamentary Assembly adopted Resolution 1449 (2005) on the environment and the Millennium Development Goals and, in its Resolution 1435 (2005), it invited member States to promote and implement in all possible areas (industry, transport, domestic, etc.) environmentally-friendly technologies with increased energy efficiency. It also called for further research and development, particularly in the fields of energy use in the transport and building sectors.

Sustainable development means care of the environment in everyday life and much can be achieved by better practices, especially in the building and housing fields, if member States commit themselves to practical action.

The Member States of the Council of Europe should draw up policies to address the environmental impact of the building sector, focusing on three environmental objectives that are closely related to the sector (ie reduction of energy use and CO₂ emissions, reduction of construction and demolition waste and prevention of indoor air pollution).

National parliaments should initiate new laws and update the existing legal framework with a view to reducing pollution, energy waste and excessive energy costs in the building sector to bring it into line with the principles of sustainable development.

Local and regional authorities should also be given the relevant powers and means to implement and integrate sustainable development in urban planning and in the building sector.

*Signed*¹:

PLATVOET, Leo, Netherlands, UEL
CANTONI Gianpiero Carlo, Italy, EPP/CD
de MELO, Maria Manuela, Portugal, SOC
de PUIG, Lluís Maria, Spain, SOC
DODDS Nigel, United Kingdom, EDG
DORIĆ Miljenko, Croatia, ALDE
DUPRAZ John, Switzerland, ALDE
ETHERINGTON Bill, United Kingdom, SOC
FERNÁNDEZ AGUILAR Adolfo, Spain, EPP/CD
GEORGIEV Zahari, Bulgaria, SOC
HALLENGREN Lena, Sweden, SOC
HUSS Jean, Luxembourg, SOC
JAKAVONIS Gediminas, Lithuania, ALDE
LE GRAND, Jean-François, France, EPP/CD
LINDINGER, Ewald, Austria, SOC
MEALE, Alan, United Kingdom, SOC
NESSA, Pasquale, Italy, EPP/CD
POPESCU, Ivan, Ukraine, SOC
PREDA, Cezar Florin, Romania, EPP/CD
STEENBLOCK, Rainder, Germany, SOC
TXUEKA ISASTI, Iñaki, Spain, ALDE
TYKHONOV, Victor, Ukraine, NR
TYKHONOV, Victor, Ukraine, NR
WAALKENS, Harm Evert, Netherlands, SOC

¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group