

## **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2002/91/EC**

Cost to the UK Economy - **£2.1bn** ([Open Europe](#))

### **Talking Points**

#### **Tougher to buy or sell a house.**

For House builders, buyers or renters, this directive adds additional costs to make properties fit the government's green energy requirements. Those owning a property must employ a specialist who has passed the government's accredited course to carry out an evaluation for an energy certificate.

#### **UK Government gold plating**

This directive gave rise to home information packs (HIP), the energy performance certificate being one of the elements of the HIP.

#### **Home Information Packs varied wildly in prices**

The consumer group Which? found that HIPs brought from an estate agent can be up to 50% more expensive than those bought from a specialist provider. [The Guardian](#), 19 August 2009.

What is it:

A directive to regulate the energy performance of buildings, both new and already standing. As part of the EU's carbon reduction programme, its [expectations](#) are for the directive to reduce carbon emissions 5% by 2020. It sets out [four responsibilities](#) for member states to implement:

1. Member states must implement a calculation for grading the energy performance of buildings, taking into account the many factors that influence energy use.

Calculation has been left to member states to decide the grading of buildings. The EU directive, however, orders the methodology to include:

- Thermal characteristics and air-tightness of the building
  - Heating installations, insulation methods and how water supplies
  - Air conditioning installations
  - Ventilation
  - Built-in lighting installations
  - Position of the building vis the outdoor climate
  - Solar protection
  - Natural ventilation
  - The designed indoor climate and other relevant factors
2. Member states must impose minimum energy performance requirements for all new buildings.
  3. An energy performance certificate must be made available whenever a building is made, sold or rented out. These in the UK are ranked from A-G. Only [qualified Energy Assessors](#) can carry out an energy assessment to award energy performance certificates. This is yet another added cost to one's ability to build, rent or sell a home.
  4. Regulations must be made to require inspection of boilers, heaters, and air conditioning systems. Since 4 January 2009 the first inspection of all existing air-conditioning systems over 250 kW must have occurred.

In translating the Directive into UK law, the government introduced the Home Information Pack. It must be said that the EU Directive does not require HIPs, but it is fair to say that if this directive did not exist, then HIPs wouldn't exist either.

There were [agreements](#) in the recasting of the directive towards the end of 2009 for member states to start installing 'smart meters' in order to further comply with the directive. This will apply to all new homes as well as homes being renovated.

Furthermore, the EU agreed to force public sector buildings, and buildings rented by the public sector, to be "nearly-zero" in its energy standards. [EurActiv](#) believes the lack of clarity in the "nearly-zero" concept is to allow member states to adopt their own definitions in order to comply with EU policies to reduce carbon emissions and meet 20% renewable energy by 2020.

Third Party Opinions

“I am firmly of the opinion Hips need to be scrapped, or at the very least suspended until the market has recovered. The government's own statistic that 77% of house buyers paid no attention to Hips when they decided whether or not to buy a property is in support of our view.” Peter Bolton-King, Chief Executive of the National Association of Estate Agents, quoted in the [Guardian](#), 19 August 2009.