

Short Evaluation of the Implementation of the Energy Service Directive (dir. 2006/32)

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Introduction

As part of implementing the Energy Service Directive (ESD), the countries have developed National Energy Efficiency Action Plans (NEEAP). In these plans, the countries explain how to achieve the 9% energy efficiency target by 2016, the target required by the ESD. Generally the NEEAPs show some weakness and methodological uncertainties in the ESD that negatively influences the implementation. The spectrum of new measures mentioned in the national action plans is quite impressive, but there are reasons to be skeptical about whether these measures have been caused by the ESD or whether they would have been implemented anyway.

Consequently, in the NEEAPs it is not clear how much expected savings by 2016 would be realised in addition to the savings that would have occurred anyway, within business - as - usual.

Weaknesses of the Energy Service Directive

The ESD entails some weaknesses and terminological uncertainties, which influenced, and still influence the implementation process. Member States consequently used the scope that was given by the ESD by displaying their national strategies and calculating their targets.

Some of the weaknesses and uncertainties related to the targets are:

- The targets formulated in the Energy Service Directive are non-binding. There is no legal way for the Commission to enforce the achievement of these targets. Therefore, most Member States will probably focus on achieving their climate and renewable energy targets (in the EU climate package) rather than committing themselves 100% to their Energy Service Directive target.
- Since this Directive is a Framework Directive on energy end-use efficiency, the energy savings presented in the NEEAPs cannot simply be added to those calculated as an effect of the EuP Directive, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the EU car efficiency regulation. Effects of Member State regulations caused by the directives mentioned above, however, can be counted within the context of the ESD Directive. At least for the first round of NEEAPs, only basic information on targets and measures was required by the ESD. Many Member States thus simply calculated 9% of their current energy consumption and declared this as their target. In most NEEAPs, thus, a methodological gap between the calculation of the energy saving target and the measures listed to achieve the target was observed. Since the Commission has not yet provided a fully harmonised set of evaluation methods, only a few MS calculated their energy savings by 2016 as an impact of measures listed in the plans. This had an impact on the evaluation of the plans, as there were methodological problems to relate the calculated target to an impact caused by energy efficiency improvement measures.
- In the ESD, the notion of additionality was taken out during the political process. It is agreed that the targets are for energy efficiency increases that are results of political actions and measures, to avoid the "natural" increase of energy efficiency, and the discussion of the linkage between developments of energy consumption, energy efficiency and GDP. Unfortunately the directive does not mandate a methodology that divides policies and measures into those that were agreed anyway (business as usual) and those that are a result of the NEEAP or similar action plans to reach the ESD target. As mentioned above, most Member States also listed measures in their plans which are "baseline" measures in that they are regulations to implement other EU directives. As a result, most of the NEEAPs show an undifferentiated mixture of business as usual measures, measures already implemented and additional measures.

* International Network for Sustainable Energy - Europe, see www.inforse.org/europe

- Although the spectrum of new measures mentioned in the NEEAPs was quite impressive, there were reasons to be sceptical whether these measures have been caused by the Energy Service Directive or whether they were planned anyway or were implemented due to other framework conditions. Consequently, in the plans itself, although most of them displayed measures being additional to the established ones, in most cases it was not clear whether the expected savings by 2016 would be additional to the business as usual trends.

The ESD also has a number of other requirements than targets, such as requirements to include energy utilities in work for energy efficiency. Also these requirements are unbinding and it seems that most of such requirements included in the NEEAPs were already decided and eventually implemented before the implementation of the ESD.

In spite of the problems, the ESD have started substantial methodological work to quantify effects of energy efficiency measures, work that can be valuable in national work on energy efficiency, as well as for future EU actions on energy efficiency. One result if this work is online:

http://www.evaluate-energy-savings.eu/emeees/en/publications/reports/EMEEES_Final_Report.pdf

The first NEEAPs are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/end-use_en.htm#efficiency

Conclusions

The ESD have a number of good intentions and useful methodology is implemented, but the directive needs a revision to be an effective framework for national energy efficiency actions, implementation of energy efficiency targets, and involving relevant stakeholders in a meaningful way in energy efficiency. It also needs to be linked to the energy and climate package, including the 20% energy efficiency target until 2020.

The measures required by the ESD should be strengthened in a revision. This could include a mandatory levy on energy consumption to be used for energy efficiency independently from energy producers, for instance by a combination of national energy savings trusts, actions by independent energy distributors, and NGOs. INFORSE-Europe is not in favour of strengthening the requirements for White Certificates in a revision.

Sources:

This analysis is primarily built of the findings of the "Energy Efficiency Watch Initiative" (EEWI) evaluation of the national actions plans of the Energy Service Directive (Energy Service Directive, 2006/32). The EEWI analysis was published in July 2009, and started in 2006. Its website is the online platform of the EEWI and the associated "Energy-Efficiency-Watch-Project" (EEW), see <http://www.energy-efficiency-watch.org/>.