

A more ambitious Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) and its side-effect on Article 8

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Among the most awaited actions foreseen in the new *'Fit for 55'* package recently released by the European Commission, the revision of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) is perhaps the most important step the EU could call for, in order to make the 'energy efficiency first' principle finally a reality.

In comparison to the 2020 scenario, the proposed updates on the EED would increase the existing non-binding goal of keeping energy use 32.5% below projected levels in 2030 – equivalent to limiting primary energy use in the bloc to 1,128m tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe). This would be replaced with a binding target of keeping energy use to 39% below projected levels in 2030, equivalent to a limit of 1,023Mtoe.

On a Member State level, this means a double amount of energy savings obligations, established in the Article 8 of the same EED Directive, for EU countries to meet their target and achieve yearly 1.5% of final energy consumption foreseen from 2024 to 2030, up from the current level of 0.8%. Concerning the implementation of the energy management systems, as a default obligation for large energy consumers, the updated EED endorses a change of the application scope of energy audits obligation from small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) definition to energy consumption.

Two are the main amendments significantly impacting on the scope of the energy audits and energy management systems implementation:

1. A new amendment on the Article 8 will require EU Member States to ensure that SMEs with an average annual consumption higher than 100TJ of energy over the previous three years will implement an energy management system, certified by an independent body and according to the European or International standards.
2. A new amendment will require Member States to ensure that SMEs with an average annual consumption higher than 10TJ of energy over the previous three years and which have not implemented an energy management system, would carry out an energy audit every four years in a cost-effective manner and with quality checks ensuring both the validity and accuracy of the audit. Results from energy audit performance would then need to be published in the company's annual report.





Note for the EU Member States

The new Energy Efficiency Directive will assign SMEs and non-SME companies the necessary tools which are crucial for implementing effective and proper energy and environmental management systems which will allow them to save more energy and increase their competitiveness at the market level.

In light of the proposed changes, the H2020-funded project DEESME has delivered a report introducing the guidelines on the challenges the EU Member States need to overcome in the implementation of the Article 8 of the EED, proposing and delivering a detailed strategy and solutions for assisting Member States in each of the main identified challenges. Moreover, DEESME has delivered a tool targeting auditors and SMEs for implementing energy audits taking advantage of the multiple benefits approach.

As for the near future steps of the project, DEESME is currently planning to arrange a workshop which will focus on the national adaptation of the guidelines for energy audits and energy management systems implementation. More information about the workshop will follow in the next months.

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Contact: **Erika Maugeri - Communication and EU Project Manager EEIP**

Email: erika.maugeri@ee-ip.org

Website: <https://www.deesme.eu/>



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