

Room temperature controls: An energy saving opportunity for the UK

The recently published eu.bac white paper¹ clearly shows the scale of potential energy savings across the EU from the application of readily available and highly cost-effective technologies such as Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs.)

As a consequence, on 11 October the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) published its report on the Revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), including a significant proposed amendment to drive the uptake of such technologies. This reads:

"Member States shall require that new buildings are equipped with self-regulating devices that regulate room temperature levels in each individual room. In existing buildings, the installation of self-regulating devices to individually regulate the room temperature shall be required when heat generators are replaced."

We call on the UK Government to support this amendment when the EPBD goes forward to the triologue for further negotiation. This would demonstrate that the UK matches the ambition to drive real changes in the energy efficiency of buildings, and would also be consistent with the Heat in Buildings consultation response, recently published alongside the Green Growth Plan, which states that *"there is a strong case for also requiring TRVs when a boiler is replaced in an existing system."* Supporting this amendment would achieve this ambition while also making sure that the current UK requirement for new buildings to have TRVs is consistently applied across the EU.

Referring back to the eu.bac white paper, the scale of opportunity identified specifically for the UK is shown below:

- 9 million homes only have manual radiator valves (MRVs)
- This equates to 62 million radiators that could be upgraded from MRVs to TRVs
- A further 43 million radiators with old TRVs could be economically upgraded to newer models.
- The annual UK energy saving would be 23 TWh, preventing 4 million tonnes of CO₂ being emitted into the atmosphere each year
- UK householders would save a total of £1.4 billion from their energy bills
- The return on investment would be £6.40 for every £1 spent with an average payback of two years

BEAMA believes that this is too good an opportunity for the UK to miss. At the moment there is a policy failure as TRVs are too often not installed at the time of a boiler replacement, despite the building regulations saying it is good practice to do so and it being cheaper to do so while the system is drained down.

This is an opportunity to ensure that all systems are made more efficient, which will result in householders having a lower lifetime cost for their heating system as well as greater comfort.

¹ Room temperature controls: How the EU is missing an opportunity for substantial energy savings (2017)
<http://www.eubac.org/news-press/eu.bac-press-release-poor-heating-controls-are-failing-european-consumers.html>