

# The Implementation of the European Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) in Austria: Will Austria achieve its Efficiency Targets in 2020?

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## Overview

The 2012 Energy Efficiency Directive (EED - 2012/27/EU) establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020. Under this directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption.

In Austria, the EED is implemented by the Austrian Energy Efficiency Act. Within this act, Austria is increasing its energy efficiency efforts aiming to a final energy consumption of 1050 PJ by 2020. Furthermore, till 2020 cumulative energy savings of 310 PJ have to be achieved.

These targets have to be reached by an obligation scheme for energy distributors (with a sales volume > 25 GWh to final energy consumers) contributing with energy efficiency measures up to (cumulative) 159 PJ and by so-called strategic measures by public authorities with up to (cumulative) 151 PJ till 2020. Strategic measures include energy taxes, corporate environmental protection subsidy schemes, refurbishment activities/vouchers, housing and energy subsidies ...

## Methods

Key elements of the Energy Efficiency Act are:

- Inclusion of all energy sources and involvement of all energy utilities in jointly meeting the specified energy efficiency targets.
- Submission of documents and reports to the national monitoring body for the measures implemented.
- Mandatory energy management systems or regular energy audits for large companies.
- Introduction or continuation of support programmes for further strengthening efforts towards greater energy efficiency.
- Alongside the energy efficiency obligation scheme, a national monitoring body was created for carrying out coordination and monitoring activities and providing assistance to companies with obligations incumbent upon them. It would also coordinate the energy efficiency action plans and annual progress reports.
- Standardisation of the 'role model' status of federal bodies: alongside general requirements which must be carried out by the State regarding the dissemination of information to citizens and companies, there are also separate requirements on public purchasing and the construction and use of Federal buildings, including in particular measures on the renovation of public buildings.
- Setting of quality standards for energy service providers: energy service providers and energy advisory services must comply with certain minimum requirements pertaining to their technical capabilities.

## Results

In 2015, the final energy consumption accounted to 1.087 PJ<sup>1</sup> - obviously still over the target of 1050 PJ that was set by the Energy Efficiency Act. Within the reporting procedures of the European Union in the frame of the energy efficiency directive, Austria reported to the European Union for the years 2014 and 2015 in total cumulated energy efficiency measures of 167 PJ (in connex to article 7 of EED (2012/27/EU)). Till 2020, Austria notified in its reports that energy efficiency measures up to 218 PJ will be achieved till 2020. At this stage, these savings seem to be achievable.

The target for the energy service directive (energy efficiency predecessor directive 2006/32/EG (ESD)) amounted to 80,4 PJ for the year 2016. Within the NEEAP 2017, Austria reported for this target cumulative energy savings (for

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<sup>1</sup> Preliminary numbers for 2016 came to 1.121 PJ by the Austrian statistical office.

the years 1991 till 2015) of 88,6 PJ. Comparing target and implemented measures, Austria could already achieve this 2016 ESD target in 2015.

## Conclusions

Energy efficiency has been a key instrument within the Austrian energy policy for many years. By implementing the ESD, Austria strengthened its efforts and could account energy efficiency measures of 88,6 PJ for the years 1991 till 2015. The ESD target for 2016 could already be achieved by 2015 in Austria.

By implementing the EED, Austria reported in 2017 energy efficiency measures in total of 167 PJ. The target within EED for Austria amounts to 218 PJ. Presently, it looks quite reasonable that Austria will achieve this target.

Taking into account the final energy consumption of 1087 PJ in the year 2015, the path to 2020 for 1050 PJ seems to be achievable. In case that the preliminary numbers for 2016 (1.121 PJ) will be confirmed by the Austrian statistical office, further steps will be required in order to fulfil the EED targets set by the Austrian government.

## References

Second national energy efficiency plan of Austria 2017 following the energy efficiency directive 2012/27/EU (NEEAP 2017), BMWF, Wien, April 2017 ([www.monitoringstelle.at](http://www.monitoringstelle.at))

First national energy efficiency action plan of Austria 2014 following the energy efficiency directive 2012/27/EU (NEEAP 2014), Wien, April 2014 ([www.monitoringstelle.at](http://www.monitoringstelle.at))

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