



Contribution by IWG5 to the European Commission’s upcoming “Heat pumps – action plan to accelerate roll-out across the EU”

17 July 2023

This is a contribution by the Implementation Working Group on Energy Efficiency in Buildings (IWG5), as part of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan, where it works to unlock the energy savings potential of the building sector (see [IWG5 website](#)). The group is composed of Representatives of EU member states and associated countries, industrial stakeholders, non-governmental organizations and research institutes. IWG5 takes a holistic approach on innovative technologies to decarbonize the building sector, covering energy efficiency, new materials and renewable heating and cooling applications. Heat pumps are a key technology to decarbonize buildings.

IWG5 supports the initiative by the European Commission to publish an action plan for heat pumps in late 2023. The group’s Implementation Plan - a document that was endorsed by the SET-Plan Steering Group - lists concrete targets to decarbonize the building sector, including the following Target 5.2-T1 on heat pumps: Cost reduction for small and large size heat pumps by 50% (compared to 2015 market price); Development of prefabricated, fully-integrated 'plug in and play' hybrid/multisource heat pump systems and integrated compact heating/cooling plants based on modular heat pumps (see [IWG5 Implementation Plan](#)).

IWG5 experts consider that more R&I efforts are needed to standardize and replicate heat pumps, this in turn is expected to result in cheaper equipment that is easier to install. While some segments of the technology are mature, experts ask to take a system approach and to have more demonstration projects to optimize the use of heat pumps in the heating and cooling systems for different building profiles. IWG5 also recommends focusing more on integrating heat pump system components in active facades to allow for holistic and quick-to-implement solutions that in time can be standardized and reduce costs. More focus is needed to continuously improve from a life cycle perspective the environmental impact of heat pumps, including the development of eco-friendly refrigerants and recyclable-reusable components.

More Horizon Europe support is needed to test heat pumps in different set-ups and to allow for better system integration. Member States should be encouraged to reassign available funding from instruments including the Recover and Resilience Facility, EU regional funds and the Just Transition Plan, to meet the REPowerEU plan to double the current deployment rate of heat pumps in buildings. The Social Climate Fund should prioritize from its deployment in 2027 the installation of heat pumps as a strategy to alleviate energy poverty in disadvantaged households and also to support SMEs affected by energy prices.

IWG5 will convene a task force between October and early 2024 that will review the section in its Implementation Plan on renewable heating and cooling technologies, including heat pump targets, activities and recommendations (view [task force call](#)). IWG5 is available to reply to questions and information requests.

Contact: Nicolas de la Vega (delavega@eurec.be)