

Abstract

Title: Barriers and Enablers to Energy Efficient Retrofitting
Of Dwellings in Ireland

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Submission Date: August 2010

National government and EU policies and legislation have driven energy efficiency measures in Ireland's residential sector. The EU Energy Services Directive (ESD) 2006/32 set a 9% energy savings target by 2016. The National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP), launched in May 2009, identified current and new measures to achieve the ESD target, with a further national target of 20% by 2020. An important feature in achieving these targets is the refurbishment of the current housing stock. There are a number of incentive schemes currently available to promote energy efficient retrofitting of domestic buildings. These schemes are operating with varied levels of success, despite the fact that full implementation is required to achieve the 2016 and 2020 targets. The market for efficiency retrofits is fragmented and undeveloped. It is difficult for individuals to determine the most beneficial and cost-effective way to increase efficiency, with credible information hard to decipher and quoted prices often unclear. The aim of the research is to assess overall success of these incentive schemes and identify the barriers to increased uptake. The research methodology included interviews with private homeowners from a broad demographic, and industry professionals. Objectives are to identify homeowner's awareness of their domestic energy use and knowledge of energy efficiency schemes available to them and establish actions needed to incentivise homeowners to avail of these schemes. Findings from the research indicated that further enhancement of the current schemes and making use of international experience by implementation of schemes such as 'Pay as you save' (PAYS) is required to engage homeowners. To achieve set targets the homeowner must be further educated and enthused into reducing their energy demand. Success must be consumer led rather than being dictated to from government through stronger legislation and penalties for non-compliance.

Keywords: Energy efficiency, Targets, Residential sector, Implementation of schemes, Incentivise.