

Energy Efficiency in Buildings

According to Mark De Martino, today it is actually possible to save the climate through better buildings.

EDITOR'S NOTE *Mark De Martino, is the Executive for EU Policy and Legislation responsible for Economic and Financial Affairs at MEUSAC. He joined MEUSAC in 2009. After graduating in International Relations from the University of Malta in 2005, he subsequently read for a Masters in European Studies. Mr De Martino worked at the Malta Business Bureau and at the University of Malta.*

CORPORATE BRIEF MEUSAC *- Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee - has three main functions - it leads a consultation process among Government officials, political parties, social partners and civil society about new EU legislative proposals; it informs the public about EU policies and legislation and EU funding opportunities; and it provides technical assistance to local councils and NGOs to tap EU funding opportunities.*

From the type of energy used to generate electricity, to the problems associated with climate change, energy is one of the most important subjects of debate. However little do we realise that a large amount of our energy usage is centred around our working and living environments. The European Union tackles energy efficiency in its Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Indeed climate change is one of the five priority areas of this Strategy together with employment, research and development, poverty and social exclusion as well as education. The challenge of climate change is addressed with specific targets for each Member State being set so as to achieve, by 2020, a reduction in the emissions of greenhouse gases, the generation of 20% of energy requirements from renewable energy and a 20% increase in energy efficiency.

The challenge of developing a more efficient use of our energy is particularly urgent with regards to energy consumption in buildings. Such a challenge is even more marked in the case of small islands such as Malta that are dependent almost exclusively on imported energy. Buildings are responsible for the consumption of approximately 40% of energy in the EU and this is because a building consumes energy in a number of ways. This takes place mainly through the provision of living comforts such as heating and cooling but also through the maintenance, alteration and demolition of a building.

“ Making buildings more energy efficient is a key objective in the efforts under way to control climate change ”

The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (Directive 2002/91/EC) applies for both residential and non-residential buildings and aims to provide a framework for buildings to be built in conformity with the principles of sustainable development. These include the site and design of a building, construction, operation, as well as any possible renovations. The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations, the Maltese regulations which transpose this Directive into national law, stipulate that all buildings that have been designed, sold or rented from 2009 onwards have to be designed, sold or rented with an Energy Performance Certificate. The benefits of such a certificate lie in the fact that a series of recommendations are given to the building owner.

The Minimum requirements of the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations aim at improving the energy efficiency of buildings by:

- Using higher specification of building materials to reduce the passage of heat through the building,
- Designing apertures to decrease the effect of solar overheating,
- Introducing control of heating and cooling systems,
- Setting the minimum criteria for artificial lighting systems and introducing lighting controls, and
- Setting new minimum standards for wells and reservoirs that have to be used for the collection and conservation of rainwater.

by Maltese households peaked in 2007 and started declining thereafter. Policy changes, alterations to pricing mechanisms and incentives to use energy efficient equipment have helped Malta's energy intensity and Maltese households to register significant decreases in energy usage over these past years.

Making buildings more energy efficient is a key objective in the efforts under way to control climate change. This can sometimes mean utilising tools and techniques from earlier times that helped use natural features and elements such as trees to create shade and lessen the need for cooling systems. Malta is making strong efforts to spread and bring into mainstream use renewable energy, such as solar water heaters for residences and solar panels for large public buildings so as to make all the changes necessary to abide by the target set for Malta so that 10% of energy is generated from renewable sources by 2020. ■

Statistics from Eurostat show that Malta's energy intensity and the household consumption of energy registered hefty increases for a period of 14 years from 1990-2004. Furthermore these statistics on household consumption of energy show that households in Malta in 2009 used more than double the energy consumed in 1990. However energy consumption



Mark De Martino



JAMAR®

NEW IDEAS FOR A CHANGING WORLD





Jamar stainless steel
Specialises in the manufacturing of stairs, hand rails, spiral staircases, balustrades, revolving doors, pvs works and other customised jobs. A vast selection of stainless steel fittings and accessories are available. We specialise in water jet cutting technology for all kinds of material

Jamar steel
Offers the construction of medium to large structures including showrooms, balustrades, fire exits stairs, cladding panels and more "irrespective of the size of project"

Jamar glass
Caters for special applications such as, punctual facedes, spider glass, spider roof, tension rod, fish style tension rod and even cable support structure, balustrades, sliding folding and revolving glass doors, showrooms facades, bullet proof, thermal insulated, bended, climatch, blindolight, antibacterial, lediamonds glass, self clean glass and more. We are also importers of all kind of glass.

Jamar aluminum
Specialises in indoor and outdoor, medium to large structures such as, sky lights, roofs, glazed apertures, railings, curtain walls, cladding, and more.

Jamar wood
specialising on heavy wooden structures such as roofs, yachts, swimming pool areas flooring, and other industrial works.

Jamar Malta Limited recent jobs: Intercontinental, Preluna hotel, Domestica (newcomplex), Konica, north and south treatment plant, FTS, M-CAST, Scotts Supermarkets and more.

Factory No 9, Valletta Road Marsa Malta. (Europe)
MRS3000 | Tel: (00356) 21 235 228 | Fax: 21 235 218
| Mob: 9949 0300 | E-mail: info@jamarmalta.com



