Global Sustainable Buildings Guide - France

Incentives for Green Retrofit

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# Are there any government-funded or sponsored schemes for improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings and, broadly, how do they work?

To reduce energy consumption in France by 40% in 2030, 50% in 2040 and 60% in 2050, official buildings, public agencies building, social houses, and dwelling and office buildings should be renovated.

According to Section L. 100-4 of the French Energy Code, France’s objective is to “have a building stock that meets low-energy building (BBC) standards” by 2050. Achieving these targets involves improving construction methods and recycling building waste. It also requires more virtuous, energy-efficient practices in housing. All these actions are essential to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Within this context, an investment for social housing plan has been produced and remains a goal to achieve. It aims to reduce the annual consumption of 800,000 apartments.

Different environmental laws have also been regularly enacted to meet this ambitious target.

The environmental law, the “Loi de Transition Energétique,” which was enacted on 17 August 2015, reinforces the target of reducing energy consumption by setting up an obligation to carry out energy refurbishment works when restoring façades and reroofing or converting lofts. In addition, all major renovation works on state buildings now involve an energy performance and carbon performance component.

The environmental law, the “Loi Elan,” which was enacted on 23 November 2018 and completed by a decree dated 23 July 2019, the “Décret tertiaire,” sets up a gradual reduction in energy consumption in the concerned buildings to prevent climate change. Final energy consumption should be reduced by 40% in 2030, 50% in 2040 and 60% in 2050 (compared with 2010). This gradual reduction applies to all newly constructed buildings and existing buildings of the “secteur tertiaire” (tertiary sector) with a surface area of 1,000 square meters or more.

Finally, the environmental law, the “Loi Climat et Résilience,” which was enacted on 22 August 2021, aims to accelerate the ecological transition of the French society and economy by, notably, prohibiting the leasing of dwelling premises that do not meet specific energy performance criteria.

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