



Association For Consumer Rights (Malta)

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Association for Consumer Rights Malta Resolution for AGM 2023

Sustainability of Construction Works in Malta

Introduction

Sustainability

The sustainability of goods and services is of increasing public concern. No product or service is delivered without an environmental or social cost. Many consumers are beginning to base their purchasing decisions not only on quality, price and availability, but also on the environmental and social impacts associated with the product or service. Therefore, sustainability plays a significant role in consumer product policy and standards.

Sustainability of construction works

The Association for Consumer Rights (ACR) is very concerned with the lack of sustainability of construction works in Malta. ACR urges government to address the relevant multiple issues and to provide the necessary funds and training with the support of the business sector in this field

Consequently the ACR strongly supports the goal of standardisation work in sustainability of construction works, which should include the equal assessment of the environmental, economic, cultural and social aspects of buildings

ACR agrees that it is of major importance to consider and enhance - at the design stage the following crucial features when tackling key topics

- Durability - suggesting binding claims with respect to a building
- Focus on energy savings – looking at both how to provide meaningful certificates and considering the economic impacts on consumers and energy use patterns - rather than on the transition to alternative energy sources that increase costs and detriment to consumers and the environment.
- Proper information provision to enhance sustainable choices for consumers and construction professionals.

Environmental Performance of Buildings

In line with ANEC position paper 'Laying the foundations for sustainable buildings', ACR calls for a National strategy on sustainable construction, with the aim to achieve.

- reliable sustainable performance assessment of buildings,
- the provision of meaningful measurement indicators, and
- reliable information to consumers and construction professionals.

While Energy performance remains crucial for the overall environmental performance of buildings, a more consistent and harmonised methodology is required *to improve the reliability of certificates* for construction works, which, should derive from an open discussion about the strategies, concepts, environmental indicators and benchmarks that should be pursued to achieve a truly sustainable buildings sector.

Key themes to be addressed:

Theme 1 Encouraging professional development and life cycle thinking

Theme 2 Addressing existing standards and methodologies

Theme 3 Indicators to measure intensity of resource use

Theme 3 Data availability, quality, and transparency

ACR proposes the introduction of improvements, focusing on the following seven areas:

- Update of the framework for Energy Performance Certificates
- Phased introduction of mandatory minimum energy performance standards for different types of buildings
- Introduction of a revision of standards
- Resource efficiency and circularity principles
- Reducing energy poverty
- Facilitating sustainable mobility

Following the Communication on the European Green Deal, the Commission is also reviewing the Construction Products Regulation to ensure the design of buildings is in line with the needs of the circular economy, and specifically with a view to enforcing the legislation related to energy performance of buildings. (Commission consultation on “Future Options for the Review of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR)).

In line with the European Social Fund, ACR urges Authorities and Government to utilise EU funding to support measures and investments in increased energy efficiency of buildings, the reduction of pollution due to construction works, ensure that rural areas as well as towns and villages are not exploited by the uncontrolled increase of construction works and renovation of old buildings especially in tourist areas and central areas in towns ignoring the cultural, environmental and social importance.

Sources:

- *Communication on the European Green Deal, the Commission review of the Construction Products Regulation, the local situation*

Grace Attard

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