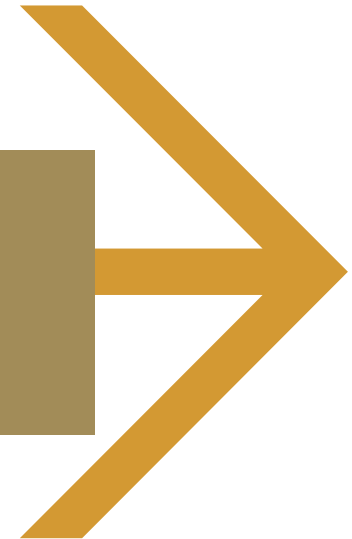


Indoor environment policy in the Netherlands

Tom van Teunenbroek
Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment
ENVIE meeting
Brussels, 16-17 September 2008





2. Indoor environment policy actions: pro and against

Reasons pro policy actions:

- people spent 85% over there time in buildings
- quality of indoor environment is often not very good
- serious health loss due to indoor environment

Reasons against policy actions:

- mind your own business
- high costs / hard to control
- lot of different stakeholders



3. Some important points of interest for policy

What are effective policy instruments in which cases (policy positions, regulations, enforcement, information exchange, communication, pilot projects, subsidies etc.)?

- Indoor air quality or indoor environment?
- Division of responsibilities between companies, owners and users of buildings, citizens and government
- Division of responsibilities between the EU and the Member States



4. Communication and information

Communication and information is a powerful tool

- Involvement of partners by mobilizing parents: e.g. awareness raising of the poor IAQ in schools aimed at parents: provide information on the IAQ of the school through assessment
- Informing all involved parties about IAQ, encompassing the phasing out of flue-less (open) gas appliances
- However regulation remains necessary to provide a framework in order to address signals like the EP's



5. Communication with stakeholders

- Consumers / parents (risk info and communication) regarding relevant situations: e.g. schools / care centres (children & elderly)
- Employees / employers (rights issues info)
- Designers / architects / project developers (risk and technical info)
- Leasers and buyers (maintenance / use) awareness raising
- Producers of building products and consumer goods (communication on guidance + guidelines)



6. Communication between governmental partners

- Many departments involved different regulation and no main problem owner (in member states as well as the Commission)
- Departmental structure differs in each EU member state
- Need of one recognized and designated EU driver
- Starting a process towards EU regulation (guidance + guidelines) will provide national focus towards IAQ
- Horizontal issues like environment & health are difficult to address especially IAQ but needs to be addressed according to the EP



7. EP resolution 4-11-2008 on mid-term review of the European EHAP 2004-2010

- No 14. Calls once again upon the Commission to come forward as soon as possible with concrete measures on indoor air quality which would ensure a high level of protection of health and safety indoors to be established, in particular when revising Council Directive 89/106/EEC of 21 December 1988 on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to construction products, and to propose measures to increase the energy efficiency of buildings and the safety and the harmlessness of chemical compounds used in equipment and furnishings;



8.a Case formaldehyde

To illustrate formaldehyde is taken as a case sample

- Emission standards depend on use and quality
- Assessment method of emission differs greatly
- No standard concentration value
- Recommendations values differ for:
 - acute (30 min) as well as chronic exposure
- Humidity is a key factor of emission
- Levels in house wet spaces are too high for chronic exposure



8.b Case formaldehyde

- CPD is now considering standardized assessment method
- Key issue to address is ambition: why not phase out formaldehyde in building materials at all

or

- Set a uniform emission standard for use and emission of formaldehyde board material



9. Proposed new policies

- All the policy proposals are evaluated for their potential of reducing population and individual exposures and risks at European level
- All policy proposals are also evaluated for feasibility
- Feasibility requirements are highest for the policies with the lowest risk reduction potential, and *vice versa*



10. Dutch comments regarding policy proposals

- **Development of EU guidelines (standards and measures) for indoor environment based on the WHO guidance**
- **EU legal requirements with regards to source emissions from building and consumer products to indoor environment**
- **Link IAQ as a pre-requisite of the EU energy saving measures in buildings (e.g. performance label encompasses IAQ)**



10. Dutch comments regarding policy proposals

- **Moisture control (fungus etc) in order to prevent condensation surfaces (in bathrooms and kitchens) in combination with the prescription in building codes of fungal resistant building products.**
- **Address the noise problems of mechanical ventilation techniques.**
- **Support the abolishment of flue-less (open) gas appliances**



11. Information and Research needs

- *Review of all research reports to conclusions, which are relevant for formulating of policy options (assignment for JRC) and communicated to research and policy community.*
- *Design of a grand study based on the review (gap analysis) to answer the structure relationship between effects and sources/exposures. (possibly combined activity of DG SANCO+ENV, JRC and ERANET environment and Health)*
- *Inventory of research questions about IAQ, which need to be answered (e.g. supposed negative effects on health by balanced ventilation systems).*