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Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme

Responsible authority: Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism

Managing authority: Austrian Energy Agency (AEA)

History, current targets and results

The EEO scheme started in January 2015, replacing voluntary agreements with energy suppliers set from 2009.

Obligated parties (OPs) must report every year by February 14th the amount of end-use energy delivered to final customers of the previous year. The targets for the OPs are set annually as 0.6% of this reported final energy consumption. 40% of the target has to be achieved in the household sector (housing or transport).

The energy savings reported between 2014 and 2017 for Article 7 of the EED (from EEOs and alternative measures (AMs)) contribute 136 PJ (cumulatively) to the savings target of 218 PJ for 2020. Assuming the already reported savings continue until 2020, the savings are expected to amount to 305.4 PJ (cumulatively) at the end of 2020. This puts Austria well above the target path and it can be assumed that Austria will exceed the savings target of 218 PJ by 2020.

37.3% of the achieved energy savings derive from actions in households.

The energy efficiency act in Austria is currently being revised based on the experience with the obligation scheme so far and the feedback from involved parties.

Key actors, roles and options

The Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism sets the rules for the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme (EEO scheme) in agreement with the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection. The Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism delegated the management of the EEO scheme (development of standardised evaluation methods, reporting and controlling tasks) to the Austrian Energy Agency (AEA).

The obligated parties (OPs) are all energy suppliers in Austria selling more than 25 GWh/a energy to end users. About 450 energy suppliers are obligated in total, covering about 80 % of the Austrian final energy consumption.

The OPs have to report the achieved energy savings by means of an IT-application called “Anwendung zum EEffG”. All public and private companies can get an energy savings account, and can transfer their energy savings to OPs through civil contracts (no trading/market). Companies with no obligation are allowed to bank implemented energy savings until the 14th of February of the subsequent year in order to be able to transfer them to OPs within the period from 2015 to 2020.

Instead of proving the implementation of energy efficiency actions, OPs may fulfil their obligation by carrying out energy efficiency actions for the respective year by a tender for the appropriate energy saving.

OPs can also use the “pay to save” option which means paying a compensation fee (0.2€/kWh of first-year energy savings).

If an OP does not comply with the regulations of the Austrian energy efficiency act the extent of the administrative penalty can be up to 100,000 €.



Scope and focus

All actions for which final energy savings can be demonstrated (except oil boilers in households) in all end-use sectors are eligible, if they exceed certain energy performance requirements, and if they are not funded by national public subsidies.

For actions carried out in households affected by energy poverty, the resulting end-use energy savings are multiplied by the factor 1.5.

The energy savings of energy efficiency actions can be calculated either with standardised or individual methods. 42 categories and more than 250 standardised methods (formula + deemed savings) are available. In addition a guideline for the calculation of energy savings for individual actions is available.

Between 2014 and 2017 76% of all reported measures were evaluated using standardised methods. 24% of the reported energy efficiency measures were documented by using individual methods.

Costs for obligated parties

No data is available regarding the specific costs for OPs.

Monitoring, Reporting and Verification

Energy savings are credited for the first year of the action. The *owner* of the energy savings is usually the final customer. The OP has to document his role in the context of the carried out energy efficiency action and has to provide in most cases an document signed by the final customer that transfers the ownership of the energy savings to the OP.

OPs can report the energy savings in the provided online database throughout the year in which the action was carried out and additionally until mid-February of the following year. The detailed documentation of the savings must be kept for checks carried out by AEA.

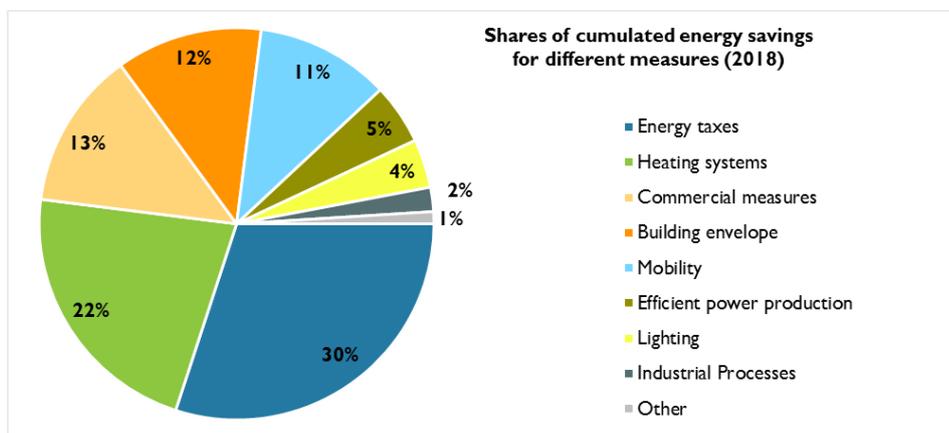
If the OPs over-achieve their obligation in one year they are allowed to transfer the respective excess savings to following years of the obligation period (2015-2020). In the case of not achieving the obligation of a given year they have the possibility to buy new energy efficiency actions from the same year on the market or they have to pay of the above mentioned compensation fee of 0.2 €/kWh.

There is no ex-ante validation of the energy efficiency actions. A statistically significant proportion and representative sample of the energy efficiency improvement measures are verified ex-post (automatized plausibility checks of all files + detailed review of samples). Selected implemented energy efficiency actions are also verified on-site.

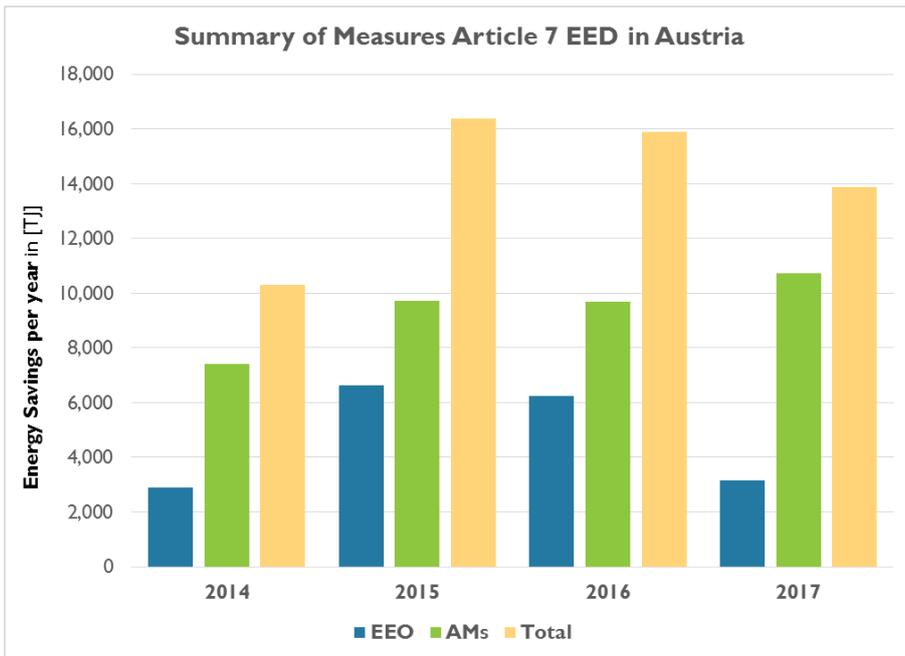
Under the Austrian EEO scheme for the evaluation of energy savings all four methods mentioned in Annex V of the EED 2012/27/EU for calculating the savings for different types of action are used: 'deemed saving', metered savings', 'scaled savings' and 'surveyed savings'

Other information about costs and benefits

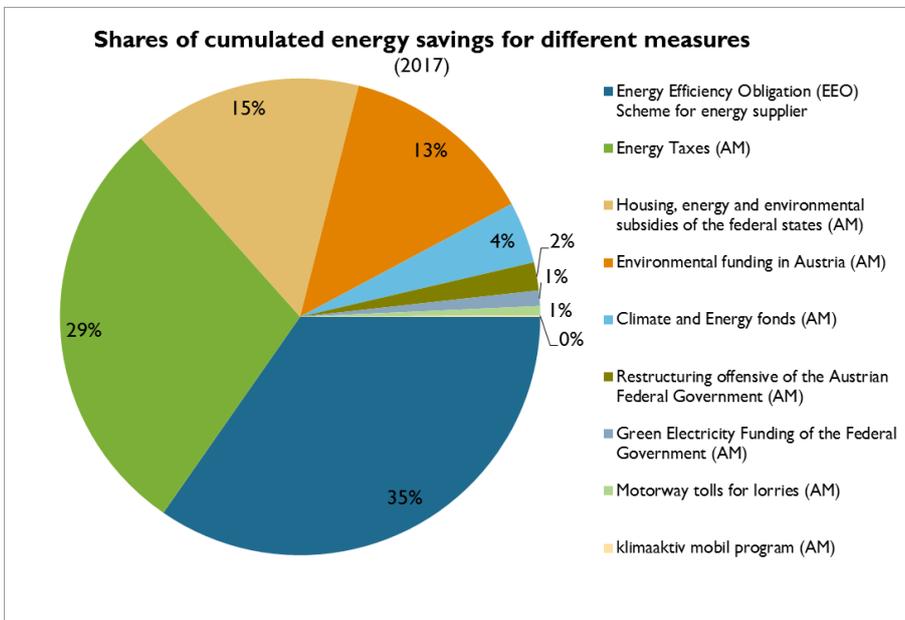
Public administration costs are about €800,000/year only for Art. 7 of the EED.



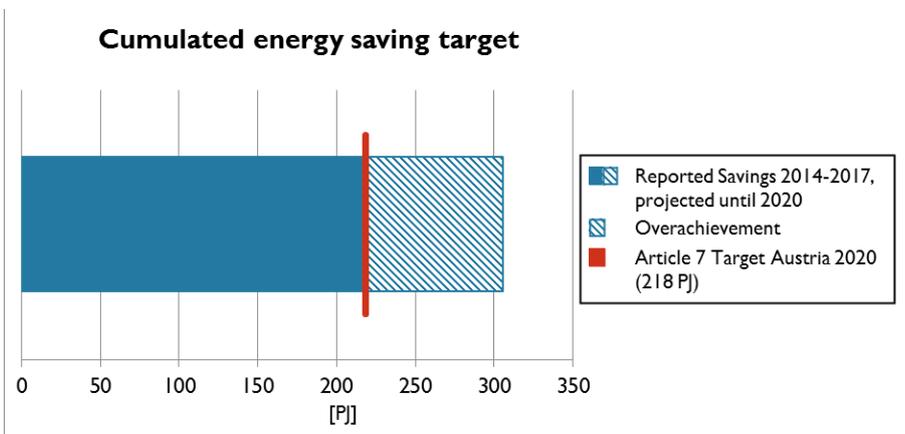
The figure shows the shares of reported annual energy savings in Austria from 2014 to 2018 distributed by energy saving action categories according to the national accounting scheme.



This table shows the first year energy savings from 2014 to 2017 from EEO; AMs and in total according to Article 7 of the EED.



This table shows the shares of cumulated energy savings from 2014 to 2017 from EEO and different AMs according to Article 7 of the EED.



This table shows the projected cumulated energy savings (measures from 2014 to 2017) until 2020 from EEO and different AMs according to Article 7 of the EED in comparison to the Austrian target of 218 PJ.

Source: Annual report 2019 according to Article 24 (1) EED 2012/27/EU

Interview with Heidi Adensam

Head of the Division Energy Efficiency and Buildings
Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism



1) What have been the main changes and lessons learnt since 2017?

There were no changes between 2017 and 2019.

Between 2017 and 2019 a broad evaluation process of the EEO was conducted, involving all relevant stakeholders.

2) And more specifically about monitoring, verification and controls?

The criteria of some generalized methods have been tightened because it has turned out that committed parties have exploited these methods in their favour.

The reporting platform (e-government) has been improved in terms of user-friendliness. This resulted in a significant reduction of incorrect entries and to an improvement in the documentation quality of the reported energy saving actions.

From year to year, the majority of the documentations reported via the platform got a better quality. A learning effect among the obligated parties could be observed, definitely.

3) What are the main interactions with other policies?

A process of reporting to the Austrian Parliament was introduced by law, which analyzed the progress and mutual effects of the Energy Efficiency Act with the Austrian implementation of other EU legislation (RES Directive, GHG effort sharing).

4) Are there challenges or changes foreseen for the coming years? (especially after 2020)

One big challenge of EEOs is and could be in the future the proof of additionality. The savings shall be shown to be additional to those that would have occurred in any event without the activity of the OP.

Another challenge is the treatment of measures implemented in the period 2020 and still alive in

2021. Considering this savings would mean higher targets. But not considering those savings would lead to a stop of investments in 2020.

Companies with no obligation are allowed to "bank" implemented energy saving actions until the 14th of February of the subsequent year in order to be able to transfer them to OPs within the period from 2015 to 2020. The predictability of the system is reduced due to those "banked" savings, they might be transferred to OPs or not. A lot of those "banked" savings might be brought on the table in the next year.

5) If you could go back in time, what would you do differently?

For certain energy saving actions, higher requirements should have already been set at the beginning of the obligation period.

The "banking" of energy saving actions, which is allowed for companies with no obligation in the EEO of Austria, turned out to be very complex and time-consuming with regard to MRV.

There is a large number of obliged parties in the Austrian EEO because of the obligation of energy companies in transport. This entailed a high administrative or control effort at all levels. It is therefore advisable, if possible, to keep the circle of obligated parties as low as possible without jeopardizing the total energy saving target.

