



Riksrevisjonen

Office of the Auditor General of Norway

The Office of the Auditor General's investigation of the authorities' work on energy efficiency in buildings

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The document is in Norwegian

Summary

Background and objective of the audit

According to the white paper on sound buildings for a better society (Meld. St. 28 (2011-2012)), energy efficiency will contribute to reducing overall energy consumption in buildings and the high use of electricity in Norway during the winter season. From 1990 to 2010, total energy consumption in Norway's nearly four million buildings increased by 33 per cent. By 2020, energy consumption in buildings will be significantly reduced using statutory and economic instruments and with the help of information. The audit covers the period 2009-2015.

The aim of the study was to illuminate the extent to which central government instruments for energy efficiency are helping to reduce energy use in buildings, and possible reasons for why the measures may have limited impact.

Findings and recommendations

The statutory instruments for energy efficiency do not work for existing buildings

- The authorities have no knowledge about the extent to which energy requirements are complied with, and the majority of municipalities do not supervise compliance.
- Most oversight of energy requirements is document oversight, and physical measuring of building heat efficiency is rare.

The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) recommends that the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, intensify efforts to acquire knowledge of whether the energy requirements in technical building regulations work and are complied with.

Economic instruments for energy efficiency have little impact on reducing energy consumption in buildings

- Enova grants for commercial buildings have limited effect.
- Enova's focus on residences has very little effect as an instrument for influencing energy use in homes. Only 113 people have received support to upgrade their residence since the scheme was established in 2013. By comparison, there are approximately 2.3 million residential buildings in Norway.
- The Norwegian State Housing Bank's basic loan has limited short-term effect because only 10 per cent of the total basic loan funds are used for upgrading existing buildings. Existing homes account for the bulk of energy consumption in the residential segment.

The OAG recommends that

- The Ministry of Petroleum and Energy consider whether Enova's subsidy schemes actually reduce energy consumption in buildings, and improve reporting about this.
- The Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, consider the focus of Enova's housing programmes and the Housing Bank's basic loan scheme.

There is still a great need for information about energy efficiency, as well as more coordination

- The Housing Bank's basic loan is little known, and information about the scheme is unclear, scant and covers energy efficiency to a marginal degree.
- Enova's information activities on energy efficiency are extensive, but homeowners still have a great need for such information.
- There is a need for the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate to strengthen its information on energy labelling.

The OAG recommends that, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy

- intensify its information campaign on energy efficiency, especially for households, cooperatives and condominiums
- continue efforts to strengthen coordination between government agencies

Ministry/ministries:

- Ministry of Petroleum and Energy

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