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RECAST ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS DIRECTIVE

FIEC, warmly welcomes the strengthening of the provisions of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive but regrets that the Commission has not gone further in laying down binding objectives for gains in energy efficiency in the built environment.

FIEC, through its member federations, is committed to achieving the EU's target of improving energy efficiency by 20 %, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 %, and increasing the share of renewables by 20 % by 2020. On 23 January 2008 the European Commission put forth an integrated proposal for climate action. FIEC considers the revision of the EPBD a crucial instrument in achieving the EU's objectives.

The implementation of the EPBD by Member States has been slow process but has helped spur interesting national initiatives. However, more needs to be done to realise the full potential of possible energy savings.

In analyzing the proposed recast legislation:

FIEC welcomes:

- 1. The recognition by the Commission that the building sector provides cost-efficient opportunities for action and can provide 11% potential for energy savings by 2020.**
- 2. The deletion of the 1000m² threshold for new buildings to consider alternative systems taking into account techniques such as cogeneration and heat pumps.**
- 3. The deletion of the 1000m² threshold for ensuring that the energy efficiency of an existing building is upgraded when it undergoes major renovation.**
- 4. The requirement placed on Member States to produce clear roadmaps for the development of low and zero carbon buildings in both the residential and non-residential sectors.**
- 5. The requirement for the energy performance certificate to include recommendations for householders to improve the energy efficiency of their home.**
- 6. The requirement to indicate a property's energy performance in announcements for buying or letting.**
- 7. The new requirement for inspection reports for boilers and air conditioning units to be handed over to home owners and tenants together with how they can improve the efficiency of these appliances.**



FIEC however regrets:

- 1. The proposal does not go far enough in laying down concrete objectives for improving the energy efficiency of the building stock. Nor does it direct the member states to do so.**
- 2. The proposal makes no reference to the role of reduced VAT, or any other financial incentive, for encouraging renovation works that will lead to real gains in energy efficiency in the building stock.**
- 3. There is a lack of any reference to the need to train building firms, especially small and medium sized enterprises in techniques for energy efficient renovation.**
- 4. The revised Directive does not seek to tackle the “split incentive” problem: encouraging landlords to make investment in renovation of their properties when they do not themselves benefit.**

FIEC maintains:

- 1. The priority must be given to encouraging home owners and landlords to make the up-front investment in renovation to boost the energy performance of their homes and properties. This is especially challenging given the current squeeze on credit for consumers and businesses.**
- 2. Investing in renovation of the building stock will help bolster growth and jobs and provide a lifeline to the many small and medium sized contractors suffering in the current economic downturn.**
- 3. In order to encourage householders to opt to renovate their homes and install new energy efficient appliances such as boilers and heating units, services linked to renovation and installation by professional contractors should benefit from a lower rate of VAT.**
- 4. Contractors need adequate training in the correct installation of materials and appliances that boost energy efficiency. FIEC, through its Member Federations, will seek to make such training more widespread.**
- 5. Large scale awareness raising campaigns through the media should be put in place at EU and national levels to inform householders as to how they can affect the energy consumption of their own homes.**

Contractors are best placed to lead the fight. In bringing down the energy consumption of Europe’s buildings and in helping mitigating the effects of climate change, WE ARE THE SOLUTION INDUSTRY!

FIEC is the European Construction Industry Federation, representing via its 33 national Member Federations in 28 countries (26 EU & EFTA, Croatia and Turkey) construction enterprises of all sizes, i.e. small and medium-sized enterprises as well as “global players”, carrying out all forms of building and civil engineering activities.

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