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Ambitious but realistic plans for smart buildings

■ Implementation of the EPBD must be better this time

"Whilst national renovation plans must be more ambitious to achieve the potential energy savings in the EU building stock that we know are possible, the proposed revisions to the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive (EPBD) will only have the desired impact if good intentions are matched by effective implementation at national, regional and local level" says Lennart Henriz, Chairman of FIEC's sub-commission on the Environment, TEC-3. "Furthermore, although we are *completely* committed to the digitalisation of buildings, we need to work together with the rest of the construction industry and the EU policy makers, to determine what we mean by "smartness" and how we will measure this. No unrealistic indicators, gimmicky terminology or mandatory use of Energy Performance Certificates, particularly as the latter are not yet reliable or consistent in all countries!"

■ Align proposed smartness indicator with building assessment frameworks

FIEC supports the push for energy renovation of existing buildings, where this can deliver tangible savings and overall improvements to the building. The proposed revisions to the EPBD are broadly welcomed, although the Federation insists that any smartness indicator developed to measure the readiness of buildings to use digital control systems, such as those designed to automatically regulate heating and cooling according to occupation levels and user need, is coherent in terms of the forthcoming voluntary assessment framework. This framework has been developed over a period of three years to evaluate the environmental performance of buildings and any separate indicators resulting from the revised EPBD would be a nonsense. New indicators should also be compatible with existing certification schemes already recognised by the market, such as LEED and BREEAM.

FIEC's position on the proposal has been published and accompanies its position on the Clean Energy Package, released at the beginning of this week. Both can be found on the FIEC website: <http://www.fiec.eu/en/fiec-positions/position-papers.aspx> .