



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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The EU Growth Pact: Refurbish 10 million homes - re-invigorate Europe's economy!

At their next meeting on 28-29 June 2012, the Heads of States and Government will decide on measures to boost growth and jobs through an "EU growth agenda".

One specific measure that would bring significant long term benefits to the EU with immediate effect on economic growth and job creation is the deep or comprehensive energy efficiency refurbishment of the EU housing stock, starting with the poorest performing dwellings.

Energy Cities, Cecodhas, Eurima, EuroACE and the European Builders Confederation call for the future EU Growth Agenda to include a clear objective: to refurbish at least 10 million housing units. Such a commitment would boost the building sector activity, create hundreds of thousands of local, non-exportable and stable jobs¹ and significantly contribute to reducing Europe's costs for energy imports whilst improving quality of life and reducing fuel poverty.

This strong political signal would provide economic actors with the necessary investment perspective and kick off concrete plans for Member States to lead by example and to develop long-term national strategies for building refurbishment, as was recently confirmed in the agreement on the Energy Efficiency Directive.

Nearly 40% of final energy consumption is in houses, offices, shops and other buildings. The cost-effective energy saving potential of the building sector is estimated to be at least 65 Mtoe.

In Germany, the building renovation programme for energy efficiency has mobilised €100 billion in investments, reducing energy bills, avoiding carbon dioxide emissions and creating around 300,000 direct jobs per year along the way.²

In France, social housing organisations tapped into their energy saving potential and used nearly 100% of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) available for improving energy efficiency in existing housing in just 22 months! The €320 million from the European grants generated investments of €2.2 billion, the creation of 15,000 local jobs in two years and financial savings of €98 per month per household.

Local and Regional Authorities, notably those involved in the Covenant of Mayors, industry, the local SMEs and all housing bodies are ready to practically implement any ambitious and enthusiastic measure aimed at the energy refurbishment of buildings, thus putting the EU back on a path to a sustainable and inclusive growth.

This is because we only have one chance to do it right – or wrong!

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¹ On average, it is estimated that investing €1 million in energy efficiency creates 19 new direct jobs. "How many jobs? A survey of the employment effects of investment in energy efficiency of buildings", EEIF, 2012

² "Working towards sustainable development: Opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy", International Labour Organization, 2012