

EU RENOVATION WAVE CEMBUREAU POSITION

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In its Green Deal, the European Commission has introduced a renovation wave of public and private buildings. It aims to create the necessary conditions to modernise the buildings sector in light of technological improvements, scale up renovations, and reap the significant saving potential of the building sector.

CEMBUREAU welcomes the renovation wave as a major opportunity for the EU to decarbonise its building stock and help reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. The European cement and concrete industry will contribute to this objective with solutions to renovation projects, as well to alternatives when renovation is not the most sustainable option to existing buildings.

In further elaborating the regulatory framework, the following key principles need to be kept in mind:

- ✓ Building renovation is part of a larger challenge for the construction sector, which also needs to play a central role in developing the **necessary infrastructure** that will improve the quality of citizens' life and bring benefits to the economy and the society;
- ✓ The renovation agenda needs to be integrated in an **urban agenda** where long-term planning looks at how residential and non-residential buildings fit into tomorrow's urban landscape;
- ✓ Building renovation is not limited to energy efficiency, it should include a focus on **material efficiency and the circular economy**, and **resilience**;
- ✓ In the same context, the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) are part of a larger regulatory framework where all initiatives announced in the Green Deal such as the Sustainable Product Policy, Green Public Procurement need to be developed with an eye for **consistency and coordination** of definitions and concepts;
- ✓ Throughout that regulatory framework, attention for a **cross-material life cycle assessment at the level of the building** should be one of the key policy drivers;
- ✓ A renovation wave should focus on **deep renovation** and also consider **rebuild**. Worst performing buildings neither offer flexibility for new functional/social needs with simple renovation, nor will significantly increase the building life expectancy or have a strong impact on energy efficiency, CO₂ reduction, or resilience (seismic risk, structural performance, material degradation). Applying the current knowledge and techniques to new buildings would deliver energy efficiency and longer life span, and incorporate a circular approach, based on durability, flexibility for future adaptation, and due consideration of reuse and recycling an element. New buildings offer greater scope to be integrated in smart energy systems that can activate the energy storage possibilities of the thermal mass of the structure;
- ✓ A renovation wave in the residential housing market requires financing mechanisms and fiscal incentives; sizeable energy efficiency gains can, in most cases, only be achieved through a deep renovation, especially for a building stock that, for a majority, still predates 1980; in practice, however, households will need to temporarily move out of their houses and heavily invest; close **cooperation with the financial sector** and a detailed mapping of the needs need to be part of the renovation wave initiative.

CEMBUREAU has published its own [carbon neutrality roadmap](#), which looks at achieving net zero emissions down the cement and concrete value chain. Amongst other issues, the roadmap looks at how carbon emissions savings can be made through a better use of concrete, and highlights the decisive role it can play as a sustainable construction material.