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For immediate release

For more information, please contact:
Lena Esteves
Eurima
Tel: 02/626 2093
Email: lena.esteves@eurima.org

PARLIAMENT PAVES THE WAY FOR BETTER BUILDINGS

Eurima welcomes the adoption of the European Parliament’s own initiative report on the Energy Efficiency Action Plan and hopes that the European Commission will transform building proposals into concrete actions

Today, the European Parliament called for an ambitious timeframe to achieve a significant reduction in energy use from existing buildings and proposed that all new buildings should be carbon neutral by 2011. In addition, the European Parliament proposed a comprehensive and effective framework to help the building chain to implement existing technological solutions that could deliver the potential.

This level of ambition in the building sector is crucial given the daily waste in our buildings across Europe. Calculated under a $70 a barrel oil scenario, there is an energy savings potential of 270 billion Euro a year and an annual carbon dioxide reduction potential of 460 million tonnes, simply from extending the current Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) to cover all buildings.

“The level of ambition proposed by the European Parliament is exactly what is needed for buildings. We now hope that the European Commission and Member States will show a similar determination,” said Jan te Bos, Eurima’s Director General.

Eurima hopes that the European Commission will now develop an action plan for buildings that will bring cost-effective solutions directly into the hands of European citizens.

“A fully extended EPBD would be a start but more than this, Europe needs a comprehensive low energy buildings strategy,” explained Jakob Sørensen, Eurima’s President. “This seems to be missing from the European Commission’s Climate and Energy Package but we hope that the Commission will follow the Parliament’s lead and develop this strategy,” continued Jakob Sørensen.

In light of the adoption of the Fiona Hall report by the European Parliament, Eurima therefore calls on the European Commission to:

1. **Implement and extend the EPBD**: The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) should include all buildings requiring heating and/or cooling regardless of size.
2. **Invest in buildings**: The EU should promote financing schemes for the renovation of existing buildings as well as significantly increase the level of EU Structural Funds allocated to buildings.
3. **Rethink national buildings requirements**: National authorities should rethink current building requirements in light of Europe’s climate and competitiveness goals.
4. **Help the building chain to implement cost-effective solutions**: The EU and national authorities should develop organisational support measures and training schemes.
5. **Adopt a strategy on low-energy houses**: The EU should promote low energy houses so that it becomes the norm for all new buildings.
Background Information

1. Eurima
   - Eurima is the European Association of Insulation Manufacturers and represents the interests of all major mineral wool insulation producers throughout Europe. Eurima members employ over 20,000 people across Europe, with the installation of insulation products accounting for an estimated 300,000 man-years;
   - Eurima members manufacture mineral wool insulation products. These products are used in residential and commercial buildings as well as industrial facilities. Glass and stone wool insulation secure a high level of comfort, low energy costs and minimised CO2 emissions. Mineral wool insulation prevents heat loss through roofs, walls, floors, pipes and boilers, reduces noise pollution and protects homes and industrial facilities from the risk of fire.

2. The Eurima Ecofys studies
   Since 2002, Eurima has been working with Ecofys, an independent and international consultancy specialised in energy saving and renewable energy solutions, to develop a deeper understanding of the potential from buildings. These studies have revealed that:
   - Buildings account for 40% of Europe’s CO2 emissions but thermal insulation could cut these emissions in half [Ecofys I, 2002];
   - In its current form the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) will capture only 10% of the potential from buildings but a fully extended EPBD could reduce total emissions from buildings by 460 million tonnes a year [Ecofys II, 2004 and V, 2005];
   - Capturing the potential from buildings would save Europe 270 billion Euro a year in energy costs, based on recent energy prices (70 US dollars a barrel), [Ecofys III 2005, IV 2005 and VI 2006], whilst creating up to an estimated 530,000* jobs.

3. Energy Use in Buildings
   - Currently over 40% of all Europe’s energy is used in buildings, this is more than is used in either transport or industry;
   - Measures such as roof and wall insulation can cut this energy use in half, reducing energy use across the EU by 20%, saving the equivalent of 3.3 million barrels of oil a day.

4. Cost Savings from Action
   - A concerted effort to reduce energy use in buildings across the EU 25 would save Europeans, at recent energy price levels, approximately 270 billion Euro a year in energy costs;
   - This figure is based on a finding of the Ecofys VI (2006) study, which used the then peak price of 70 US dollars a barrel of oil as a basis for the calculation; the most recent peak price, 3 January 2008, was 100.05 US dollars a barrel.

5. Environmental Benefits
   - The major environmental benefit from reducing energy use in buildings is a decrease in carbon dioxide emissions;
   - The technical potential from buildings across the EU is a CO2 emission reduction of 460 million tonnes (Mt) per year, which is more than the EU’s total Kyoto commitment;
   - If a concerted action was launched today to improve energy efficiency in buildings, a CO2 emission reduction of 83 Mt per year by 2010 could be achieved with this figure rising to 144 Mt per year by 2015 and the technical potential of 460 Mt per year being reached by 2032.

5. Job Potential
   - Improving energy efficiency in buildings would require a major effort to renovate existing homes, which has the potential to create significant jobs across the EU;
   - It is estimated that a concerted effort to improve energy efficiency in buildings would lead to the creation of the equivalent of up to 530,000* full time jobs across the EU 25;
   - These jobs would remain for the entire period of the renovation cycle, e.g. 30 years.

* Eurima estimate