



european  
council for an  
energy efficient  
economy

## **New ecee report supports extending energy efficiency requirements to cover more renovated buildings**

**27 February 2009 – A new report published today confirms that existing buildings could have a lower threshold to be considered “major renovations.” This would significantly increase the cost-effective potential for the total impact of the directive. The report is published by the European Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ecee), Europe’s only NGO solely dedicated to energy efficiency.**

*In November 2008, the Commission adopted a framework for the long-term improvement in the energy performance of buildings, the sector with high-untapped potential for energy efficiency improvements. ecee has been participating actively in the approval process.*

One of the key issues relates to *existing buildings* because of the remaining high potential for significant energy savings and carbon emissions reductions. To address this area, removing the 1000 sq. m. threshold for major refurbishment is essential, according to ecee. The current proposal requires action upon “major renovation” of a building. This is defined as a situation where the total cost of renovation of the building envelope or the technical building system is higher than 25% of the value of the building, or where more than 25% of the surface of the building envelope undergoes renovation. ecee has argued for lowering this threshold to trigger more cost-effective deep renovation opportunities and thus realise a higher proportion of the available potential. Recently, the ecee commissioned a study to see what was possible and realistic.

The consulting company, Ecofys, a specialist in this field, prepared the new report, *Major Renovation – Definition in Monetary Terms*, for ecee. The report concludes, “*a lowering of the 25% threshold, e.g. to 10% or 15%, could therefore be considered.*” Looking at the percentage values of the different assessed measures, the 25% triggering threshold mentioned in the cost-related definition of major renovation could be reached only when a combination of major measures is undertaken (e.g. renovation of facade, roof, exchange of windows and heating system in case of single family houses). This means that many opportunities to carry out highly cost-effective “deeper” renovations will be lost. On the other hand already single measures, like renovation of the total façade, offer opportunities: The report further states that “*the considerable spans in results for the ratio between maintenance costs and building value that is caused by differences between countries, building types and building locations, makes it difficult to define one ‘optimal’ threshold on EU level as regards the value definition.*” The study finally concludes that possibly an additional component-related definition dealing with components such as facades, windows and heating systems may “*be beneficial to identify more precisely situations that offer possibilities for cost-effective coupled renovation.*”

Currently the Industry, Research and Energy Committee of the European Parliament is reviewing the proposal and coming up with its own recommendations for the way forward. Council will be reviewing the proposal in detail later this year. ecee anticipates this will provide the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission with valuable insight to improving the definition of major renovation and its application.

The report is available for download on the ecee website [www.ecee.org/buildings](http://www.ecee.org/buildings)  
See also ecee’s position on the EBPD recast on this page.

For further information, contact

Nils Borg, Executive Director. [ecee@ecee.org](mailto:ecee@ecee.org), +46 70 585 31 74

ecee is a non-profit, membership-based European NGO. The goal of ecee is to stimulate energy efficiency through information exchange and co-operation, and to promote the understanding and application of energy efficiency in the energy research, policy and commercial organisations.

ecee SECRETARIAT  
SVEAVÄGEN 98IV  
SE-113 50 STOCKHOLM  
SWEDEN

[www.ecee.org](http://www.ecee.org)  
[ecee@ecee.org](mailto:ecee@ecee.org)