



European Council  
of  
Civil Engineers

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# Standing Committee

## Development & Business Environment

**Chairman:** **Karlheinz ZACHMANN**

**Vice-Chairman:** **Aris CHATZIDAKIS**

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## The incoming Danish EU Presidency

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 Denmark took over the EU Presidency under the following programme:

Addressing the crisis and promoting green growth – a responsible dynamic green and safe Europe.

Salient points are:

- Implementation of the Six-Pack;
- Working on a reinforced economic governance;
- Helping to set up a new Growth Agenda focusing particularly on the Internal Market;
- To concentrate on the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED);
- To focus on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MMF) – being probably the single most important item.

- a) Since the last ECCE GAM in Antalya the following ECF gatherings took place: 22/11/2011, 27/1/2012 and 13/4/2012.
- b) From the meeting of 27/1/2012 ECF counts now 12 permanent members:  
After a convincing presentation of its credentials and ample information on the added value they can provide to ECF, the Brussels Office of RICS (The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors) is admitted as new member for the time being.  
The RICS has more than 100.000 qualified members in 140 countries. Headquartered in London with six regional offices around the world, the RICS is a public interest body that sets standards for its members in the field of land, property and the built environment, aiming to achieve best practice.  
There is a number of specializations (surveyors):  
- Quantity Sr., Project Management Sr., Building Sr., Building Control Sr.  
The RICS office in Brussels monitors policy developments at EU-level:  
- Energy, Construction, Housing and Urban Planning, Property Valuation, Internal Market, Land and Urban Development.

At the same gathering ACE (Architects) is anew represented, and this by its just appointed new General Secretary Mr. Jan PRICHARD.

### c) The main issues

1. Taking into account the well organized and appreciated 1<sup>st</sup> European Engineers' Day, held in Brussels on 8/12/2012, it is suggested to think about the organization of a European Construction Day, preferably at the EP.
2. The social partners of the Construction Sector – FIEC and EFBWW work together with the EC on "Information Modules on Asbestos": this is still an important item within the field of health and safety at the workplace (e.g. decontamination etc.).
3. The follow-up study on construction competitiveness is still not finalized – problems with the final scope and problems / questions from GD ENV.
4. The **Energy Efficiency Directive** is still a priority issue: the EP is considering the EC Proposal and it seems that compromises may considerably water down the initial text. 1.600 amendments are tabled.

- 5. Cost Optimal Methodology:** (ref. to the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive: EPBD):  
According to the EC the primary aim is to come to a common uniform method facilitating reporting and comparison.  
The relevant Commission Regulation falls under the “comitology procedure”. This means that EP and Council can only adopt or reject.  
No negotiations are possible.  
As far as the accompanying “Guidelines” are concerned the EC seems to have not yet started with the internal consultations.  
The relevant voluminous document will get the form of a Communication.
- 6. Water Performance in Buildings**  
This EC initiative tends to clarify the use of water in buildings. It may also include piping systems and water metering. An open consultation was held up to 8/2/2012.
- 7. Revision of the PPD**  
There seems to be a large space for the “negotiated procedure”:

Also facilitations for SMEs and for “green aspects” may be considered and taken on board. The EC expects to have the work completed by end of 2012.

### **8. EU 2020 PROJECT BOND INITIATIVE**

Primary estimates point to investment needs (transport, energy, IT and Construction networks) of EUR 1,5 to 2 trillion!

The current crisis makes it crucial to foster the participation of the private sector in financing infrastructure projects. The EC’s role will be “risk sharing” together with the EIB (and / or other financing partners).

The EC has recently issued its report 2010

- In most countries the situation of SMEs has **improved** – and this with respect to:
  - **Access to the Internal Market;**
  - **The reinforcement reactions by and from public administrations;**
  - **The promotion of Entrepreneurship**
  
- The only section in which the situation is declining is **Access to finances**! And that is why the EC presented on 7/12/2011 a proposal for a regulation on risk-capital funds. The relevant action plan aims at facilitating the access.

In May 2011 Vice-President TAYANI has launched the Forum for the financing of SMEs.

This Forum brings together:

- **Big professional organizations**
- **European banking organizations**

In view to study the possible means to arouse the continuous flow of financing.

Member States are requested:

to render transmissions of SMEs = more easy, less costly, deliver more efficient services.  
and all this with the aim to preserve employment.

Attention is also given to SMEs in EU border regions.

SMEs play a pivotal role in the EU economy!

On 9/11/2011 the EC presented a Communication entitled: "Small Business – Big World"

In this strategy the Commission sets out a comprehensive action plan to SMEs growth and competitiveness in the Internal Markets: - including e.g. information on non-European markets, improvement of the coherence and cost-effectiveness of support activities.



Furthermore the EC is decided to assist SMEs going international and to give them support through relevant Networks and Information Points.

The relevant initiative, launched on 28/5/12 by Vice-President TAJANI, will focus on SME-clusters, willing to sign up to the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

The relevant EC contribution amounts to more than 1.5 million €.

More than 600 Business Support Centers from the Enterprise Europe Network will help SMEs to become successful.

In line with the 2020 “flagship initiative” on Resource Efficiency the EC published on 20/9/2011 a “Roadmap” on resource efficient growth – getting more from fewer resources.

In this view also ecosystems, soil and water are resources – and not only oil petrol and electricity!

The roadmap especially focuses on sectors that use the most resources = food, buildings and mobility.

Things like recycling, better product design, materials substitution and eco-engineering are on the Agenda.

A clear system of targets and indicators will be developed by 2013.

## The Connecting Europe Package

On 19/10/2011 the EC tabled a plan (CEP) providing 50 billion € for networks of transport, energy and IT (digital).

To assist with the financing of CEP the EC has adopted the terms for the EUROPE 2020 **Project Bond Initiative** (a risk sharing instrument).

- : appropriations from the EU budget
- : attraction of financings from EIB and
- : other private market investors.

The concrete details are expected for this year.

On 13/12/2011 the strengthened Pact for Stability and Growth is entered into force.

This so called "Six Pack" consists of 5 Regulations and one Directive.

The relevant proposal from the EC was adopted by all 27 Member States and is an important step to guarantee the budgetary discipline, the stabilization of the economy and to avoid a new crisis within the EU.

**I recall my urgent invitation to all ECCE Participants and Members:**

- to take an active and proactive role in the work of our SC
- to make themselves informed on salient issues
- to contact national Chambers, governmental services and MEPs
- to make known their interests and concerns/ positions
- to inform President, ExBo and your representative in Brussels

**From now on it is vital that all ECCE members play an active role within ECCE and this SC.**

**Unfortunately since our GA in Malta no reaction nor contribution has been received!!**

# **THANK YOU!**

**Karlheinz Zachmann**