

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Brussels, 13 March 2008 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### EPBD recast “golden opportunity” to promote very low energy housing

The results of a survey initiated by the European Alliance of Companies for Energy Efficiency in Buildings (EuroACE) demonstrate that the time is ripe for the European Commission to introduce mandatory requirements for EU Member States to establish a political timetable to make very low energy homes the default standard.

The survey revealed that a majority of countries have either an official or non-official definition of very low energy housing and many are planning a revision of their energy requirements. However, only seven countries<sup>1</sup> have started the ball rolling to introduce a definition of very low energy housing as the minimum requirement for new buildings in their national building regulation. Despite the fact that many European countries are already taking national action towards implementing requirements for very low energy housing over a 5-12 year timeframe, very few intend to strengthen the requirements for existing buildings; an important step towards achieving a major reduction in the overall energy used for buildings.

EuroACE believes that the recasting of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD – 2002/91/EC) provides an excellent opportunity for the European Commission to require that every Member State establish a plan to deliver very low energy homes. In order to do this effectively, the recast should request that Member States define very low energy housing at national level, draw up a national strategy towards this level of energy performance, and start to focus on upgrading the energy performance of the existing building stock.

“Requiring all Member States to adopt a definition of very low energy housing as a minimum requirement for new and existing buildings alike should be a fundamental goal of the recast”, says EuroACE political advisor Andrew Warren. “There is a strong need for Member States to introduce a national or regional definition of very low energy housing into their building regulations in order to better facilitate the development of national strategies to ensure high energy performance in buildings becomes the standard.”

The Commission is uniquely placed to initiate actions to fulfil the ambition contained in the EU Action Plan for Energy Efficiency to develop an EU strategy towards very low energy housing. Given the initial political will revealed by the survey, EuroACE encourages the Commission to use the current recast of the EPBD to promote this further.

The full report can be downloaded from [www.euroace.org](http://www.euroace.org) and from [www.sbi.dk](http://www.sbi.dk).

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<sup>1</sup> Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany and the United Kingdom (England and Wales)

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## Note to Editors :

One of the prescribed actions on buildings in the Communication from the Commission “Action Plan for Energy Efficiency: Realising the Potential” (COM(2006)545) is for the Commission to develop a strategy before 2009 to promote the widespread deployment of very low energy houses or passive houses by 2015.

The survey was carried out in autumn 2007 by the Danish Building Research Institute (SBI) to gain an overview of the current activities in European countries on very low energy and passive housing i.e. housing designed to a significantly higher standard of energy efficiency than minimum requirements of national building regulations. Twenty EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland provided feedback on the existence of low energy housing definitions, of supporting legislation for promoting very low energy housing, and of strategies for the future. It targeted both official and non-governmental approaches.

*EuroACE was formed in 1998 by twenty of Europe’s leading companies involved with the manufacture, distribution and installation of energy saving goods and services. EuroACE members have a total turnover of 36,860 million euros and employ 173,557 people. The mission of EuroACE is to work together with the European institutions to help Europe move towards a more sustainable pattern of energy use in buildings, thereby contributing to Europe’s commitment to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.*

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