

FIEC PRESS RELEASE – 29/5/2012

FIEC supports the Olbrycht draft report to enlarge the scope of ERDF programmes.

FIEC would like to recall that the future ERDF has a huge potential in providing more substantial financing for projects both in the field of energy efficiency in the built environment and infrastructure. The ERDF is a vital instrument of territorial cohesion in the EU and is a crucial contributor to growth and employment in the EU's regions.

In the debate on the future ERDF Regulation, FIEC welcomes the amendments proposed by the Rapporteur Jan Olbrycht and stresses the need for more flexibility regarding thematic concentration.

"Thematic concentration demanding 80% of the resources focusing on three thematic objectives would excessively limit the possibility of Members States and regions to adapt their programmes to specific territorial needs", commented Jacques Huillard, FIEC Vice-President Economic and Legal.

"Therefore, **decreasing the obligatory quota** in the more developed regions, the regions in transition and the less developed regions, could actually ensure more **flexibility** and ensure funding gets to those viable projects quickly"

Focusing on the real economy and the importance of concrete investments for sustainable growth and jobs in Europe

Huillard continued: "Thematic concentration can only function efficiently if it translates the priorities of Europe 2020 into **investment into the real economy, i.e. concrete projects.**"

Among the four main investment priorities, FIEC namely welcomes, the support to the shift towards a low-carbon economy including the promotion of **sustainable urban mobility as well as energy efficiency in the built environment**. Transport, especially in urban areas, is one of the main sectors contributing to the shift towards the low-carbon economy and should therefore be included in this thematic objective.

Under the investment priority "*promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures*", FIEC supports the inclusion of the **rehabilitation of existing infrastructure** to upgrade the Trans-European Transport Network.

FIEC also welcomes the inclusion of the **energy networks** (construction and modernisation of transmission and distribution networks) in the low-carbon economy thematic objective. FIEC considers essential to achieve a harmonised and truly integrated single energy market aiming to meet climate and energy security challenges.

FIEC is the European Construction Industry Federation, representing via its 33 national Member Federations in 29 countries (27 EU & EFTA, Croatia and Turkey) construction enterprises of all sizes, i.e. craftsmen, small and medium-sized enterprises as well as "global players", carrying out all forms of building and civil engineering activities.

For further information, please contact Frank Faraday or Christine Le Forestier

FIEC, Avenue Louise 225, BE-1050 Bruxelles

Tel. +32-2-514 55 35, Fax +32-2-511 02 76 e-mail: info@fie.eu web: www.fiec.eu