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Re.: SME Strategy / COVID-19 Crisis

15 April 2020

Dear Commissioner,

On behalf of the European Council of Engineers Chambers (ECEC) I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Commissioner for the Internal Market. Especially right now in the COVID-19 crisis this is an extremely important and challenging position.

On current occasion we would like to present to you (see documents enclosed) our approaches and ideas in view to overcoming the current COVID-19 crisis and to enforcing the SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe.

The ECEC is the umbrella organisation of European Engineers Chambers. Its members are national Chambers or other legally established public bodies representing authorized Chartered Engineers. Currently the ECEC represents 16 European Engineers Chambers and over 300.000 highly qualified European Chartered Engineers who are members in these Chambers.

ECEC objectives and priorities focus on

- securing **quality and safety** of Design and Construction
- stimulating **sustainability** of Design and Construction
- enhancing **international mobility** of European Chartered Engineers

The ECEC professes **to the necessity of adequate professional regulations for engineers regarding level of qualifications, professional conduct and responsibility and continuing professional development**: Quality of engineering services is a basis for safety and reliability of infrastructure, buildings, plants and products. It is the basis for the intelligent use of resources and for ensuring that technological advances are applied in a creative, conscious and ethical manner. A lack of quality in engineering services leads to unfulfilled consumer expectations and cost explosions. The current COVID 19 crisis clearly shows the high dependence of European society from professional excellence.

The ECEC further explains the impacts of professional regulation in the paper "9 arguments" why professional regulation for engineers is essential for Europe

The ECEC regards the **further enhancement of fair procurement procedures for engineering services based primarily on quality instead of price competition only as a major priority**: Inappropriate



procurement procedures for planning services have a strong negative impact on quality, cost certainty, time reliability and overall successful implementation of a project. Even though it is already common understanding within many procuring authorities that for intellectual services such as engineering services only quality based procedures are possible and adequate, their practical implementation is often still lacking in effectiveness. Defined standard performance profiles/scopes for each engineering service that transparently show the required services for a project are important tools for procuring authorities. For the conduct of quality procurement procedures adequately defined quality criteria, the use of adequate methods of price assessment and measures to guarantee fair evaluation are of utmost important.

The ECEC further explains practical approaches to cost optimization and fair quality competition in the papers "The ECEC Public Procurement of Engineering Services: Fair procedures ensure successful projects" and "Independence of engineering services saves people's money - Performance profiles for Engineering services: cost optimization and quality assurance"

The ECEC fully supports the approach that the use of BIM in public procurement projects needs to comply with basic requirements such as guaranteeing an "open BIM" as the most essential criterion to keep the market open for SME:

Digitalisation is one of the most important future topics for the building sector. If basic requirements are complied with the use of BIM, this leads to reliable forecasting of the timeframe, results and costs at each stage of its life cycle, of a project including operation; to an increase of maneuverability and efficiency of use of resources by all participants and to an increase of labor productivity. But without an in-depth project preparation potential positive effects of the BIM method cannot be realized. Past projects have proved that in case of a lack of preparation and/or without the correct use BIM leads to higher costs than expected, longer project duration than expected, lower quality than expected, weaker usability than expected and finally political disasters. It is thus of utmost important to comply with basic requirements for the successful use of BIM. In order to keep the market open for SME it is necessary to guarantee an open BIM securing a non-discriminatory common access to planning software via an open standardized interface providing the loss-free transfer of the exchanged data.

The ECEC further explains the basic requirements for the successful use of BIM in the paper "BIM for Politicians – ECEC Statement on Building Information Modelling (BIM)"

The ECEC wishes to express its availability for any exchanges and would like to wish you all the best for your work in the European Commission and especially for finding ways to overcome the effects of the COVID-19 crisis.

Yours sincerely,

Klaus Thürriedl
President of the ECEC and Chartered Engineer for Environmental Engineering
and Water Management

Enclosed:

ECEC Statements on the COVID-19 crisis and the SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe