



The logo features the letters 'AIE' in a blue circle, with a stylized blue wave to the right. This is enclosed within a larger, light grey circular frame with a small dot at the top and bottom.

NEWSLETTER

June-July 2018



Editorial: Completing the road to Europe's energy transition

By: Georgia Concas, General Secretary

The road to the Clean Energy Package has been a long one, but we can now see the light as agreement has been reached on three more key pillars of Europe's energy transition this past month: the new Renewable Energy Directive, the new Energy Efficiency Directive, and Energy Union Governance.

The first of the three to go past the finish line was the new Renewable Energy Directive, and its more ambitious objectives means that all Europeans are winners. With an increased EU-wide target of 32% renewable energy by 2030, a supportive framework for emerging models – such as renewable energy projects on multi-occupancy buildings and at municipality scale, more attractive financial conditions for small renewable energy projects, especially for electricity directly consumed on-site, and simpler administrative procedures, the door is opening up for renewable energy to prosper in Europe.

For electrical contractors, this means we will also see a growth in new opportunities for our sector. Coming with an uptake in renewable and decentralised energy is inevitably a surge in business opportunities and jobs, as skilled electrical contractors are the ones on the ground installing the technology necessary to fulfil the EU's new renewable energy objective. This is truly a win-win situation for both the EU's economy and the environment.

Second on the docket was the new Energy Efficiency Directive, where a deal was reached after the sixth trialogue meeting. Yet, the wait was worth it, as AIE was able to claim a huge win as the default Primary Energy Factor (PEF) was lowered to 2.1 – a policy ask that AIE, among other organisations, have been working on for several years. On top of this, the agreed upon 32.5% energy efficiency target is a significant increase from the 20% in 2020 and will be a major force in increasing energy efficiency in Member States.

Last but not least, a deal was reached on Energy Union Governance, a law which will guide Member States to plan and report on their

efforts to meet the targets set out in the other Directives and Regulations which make up the Clean Energy Package. With this agreement, the ball is now in the court of Member States, and AIE member national associations are ready to play and help guide their respective countries to meeting, and beating, their objectives..

However, the road does not end here as a decision still has to be taken on the reform of Electricity Market Design legislation, which will also have major implications for electrical contractors. As it stands, the current draft legislation threatens to decentivize the uptake of small-scale renewables, which are the biggest creators of jobs in the European renewable energy sector. Policies such as removing priority dispatch and imposing balancing responsibilities for small-scale renewable installations would place an unfair burden on these installations, imposing a major obstacle for the EU to realise its new renewable energy target.

AIE, along with other trade associations, continue the fight to remove these policies through the [Small is Beautiful campaign](#), which recently released a joint letter to policy makers ahead of the Market Design dialogues.

Yet, as policy makers now flee Brussels during the summer vacation, we will have to wait until the fall to see if the sun will continue to shine on small-scale renewable installations as we work to put in place the missing pieces on the road to our final destination: a Clean Energy EU.

Highlight: It's time for the European construction industry to embrace digitalisation – an interview with Eugenio Quintieri, Secretary General at the European Builders Confederation (EBC).



AIE: The European Builders Confederation (EBC) is the voice of construction of SMEs in Europe – what does the European construction sector currently look like for SMEs and what role does EBC play?

EQ: EBC was established in 1990 and has been the leading association representing micro, small and medium-sized enterprises working in the European construction sector ever since. We ensure that construction SMEs' and craftsmen's specific needs are taken into consideration during the European legislative process in order to create an SME-friendly business environment and to make it possible for construction SMEs to be the driver of sustainable economic growth in Europe.

EBC is also a member and partner of UEAPME (the European Association of SMEs), for which it chairs the Construction Forum, as well as Small Business Standards (the European Association representing SMEs in standardisation), for which it covers all standardisation issues that may affect manufacturers and users of construction products.

With 3 million enterprises and a total direct workforce of 18 million, the construction sector contributes to around 9% of the GDP of the European Union – this means that the construction sector is of vital importance to the European economy.

Of even greater importance are construction SMEs – around 99.9% of the European construction is actually composed of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which altogether produce 80% of the construction industry's output.

The construction sector is therefore essential to boosting local economic growth and providing thousands of jobs across Europe – at EBC we work to make sure that policy makers and citizens alike understand the important role of construction SMEs in the European economy.

AIE: AIE teamed up with EBC, along with other stakeholders in the construction sector, with the launch of the [“European Digital Manifesto for Construction: Smarter construction, Stronger economy, Inclusive society”](#) . Why is digitalisation so important for the sector?

EQ: As the construction sector makes up such a significant part of the European economy, its digitalisation is essential for the EU to remain competitive globally while supporting local jobs and business opportunities.

Digital solutions in construction have great potential to increase productivity, reduce construction costs, alleviate burdensome and physical tasks, improve the data collection and analysis of energy efficiency performances, and lower life-cycle costs of buildings.

Yet, digitalisation is an enabler and not a goal in itself. Digital solutions, such as BIM, make sense when they are affordable, easy to access and constitute a real added value to construction SMEs and craftsmen. SMEs often lack internal experts that are able to deal with digital tools and need the support from large contractors, architects, manufacturers and further value chain actors.

However, as 99.9% of the European construction sector is composed of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, the digital transformation of the construction sector cannot happen without these crucial actors.

For this reason, EBC has started to collaborate intensively with all construction actors, such as AIE, in order to enable a successful digital transformation of the construction industry. The first result of this collaboration has been the [“European Digital Manifesto for Construction: Smarter construction, Stronger economy, Inclusive society”](#) .

This report is the first of its kind and outlines how the digital transformation of the construction sector can be an important tool to achieve other EU priorities such as job creation, energy efficiency, education, health and environmental protection. The construction sector is in a pivotal position at the crossroads of different economic sectors, which makes its digitalisation crucial not only for the prosperity and growth of the European economy, but to raise the quality of life for all Europeans.

AIE: How can we ensure that Europe can build a prosperous digital construction sector at the EU level?

EQ: The construction sector is already digitalising on its own – yet, this can be catalysed with more cooperation across the whole construction value chain and with support from the EU.

Firstly, only an inclusive transformation will ensure the strengthening of the sector as a whole. Best Practices show that when SMEs are introduced to digital tools from other sectoral actors, there are higher probabilities that those SMEs will also use them in the future of their daily routine. This is a win-win situation for all as the maximum number of stakeholders in the construction industry can benefit from digital solutions, which helps to boost the sector overall.

Secondly, the European Union should make the digitalisation of the construction sector a top political priority. There must be appropriate regulatory frameworks to ensure a level playing field such as antitrust, data quality, and privacy legislation. Another way the EU can support the digital transformation of the construction sector is by ensuring that the appropriate measures in the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) are in place to support construction actors access to finance in the fields of R&D, skills and IT infrastructure.

Altogether, these elements will help push the digital transformation of the construction sector in the EU forward, a transformation which all Europeans serve to benefit from.

Read the European Digital Manifesto for Construction [here](#).

Installers' Summit 2018 – Installers in the Digital Age



Digitalisation is disrupting virtually every industry – and the installation sectors are no exception. This is why at this year's **Installers' Summit**, organised jointly by AIE and **GCP Europe**, we will focus on how digitalisation will impact installers across Europe - from new technologies, to new challenges, to new business opportunities – we will do a deep-dive into how the digital revolution is changing the game for installers in both the electricity and HVAC industries.

Hosted by our Swedish members in beautiful Stockholm, we will take advantage of learning from the Swedish experience, as they are one of the leading European countries on digitalisation. We will hear from the Swedish Government's investigator of the Digitalisation Authority, Bengt Kjellsson, and explore how Sweden has achieved their digital success and what they have planned to take it even further in the future.

Not only is digitalisation changing what is actually installed, but it is also changing how we manage technologies and solutions after the installation is done. With great potential coming from cloud solutions and IoT to improve the services that installers can offer, also comes threats from cybersecurity and digital gaps that must be addressed on the ground-level in order to successfully usher in the digital age. With high-level speakers from leading companies that have embraced digitalisation such as KNX and Schneider Electric, we will investigate the changing technological and business landscape for installers with the digital transformation.

Cutting-edge case studies such as innovative BIM projects, e-commerce apps, and a digital workers database in Sweden, will help us discover the challenges and opportunities for installers that comes with the digital revolution and see how we can take these lessons across borders to other countries in Europe.

In a sector often thought to be 'traditional', it is now more important than ever for installers to embrace digitalisation to stay competitive in the New Digital World and not be left behind. The Installers' Summit 2018 is the perfect opportunity to gain deeper insight into what digitalisation means to the sector and discuss with other installers across Europe how to not only survive, but thrive in the digital age.

See the full agenda for the Installers' Summit 2018 [here](#).

To learn more about the Installers' Summit, please contact [Alyssa Pek](#).

AIE joins the Platform for Electromobility

AIE is thrilled to announce that it is now a member of the [Platform for Electro-mobility](#).



A multi-stakeholder platform which works towards the electrification and decarbonisation of transport in Europe, the Platform for Electromobility unites organisations from across civil society, industries, and transport modes to promote electro-mobility solutions.

AIE is the first member of its kind to join this platform, with first-hand technical expertise and sectoral representation over many EU countries, AIE will bring the knowledge needed to design, install and maintain EV infrastructure efficiently to build a sustainable future for electric transport.

It is clear that electrical contractors have a key role to play in the deployment of EV infrastructure in Europe, and as a member of the Platform for Electromobility, AIE can be sure to bring this expertise to the discussion table in order to drive forward the electrification of Europe's transport sector.

This is part of a new initiative at AIE to become more involved in the EV sector in Europe. As transport becomes more and more electrified, this not only means that Europe can be on the right path to reaching its decarbonisation goals, but it will also mean the creation of thousands of new skilled, local jobs for electrical contractors across the EU.

Electrical contractor's role in the EV revolution is especially relevant as the new Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) has recently entered into force. The EPBD obliges Member States to equip new and renovated buildings with EV conduits and charging points, which is an important step in the right direction to electrify Europe's transport sector.

In response to these new obligations, AIE has released a position paper which puts forwards recommendations on how to best implement the

roll-out of EV infrastructure in new and renovated buildings.

This position paper outlines key technical and design elements that need to be taken into consideration in order to ensure that the EV infrastructure of today fits the needs of tomorrow. Recommendations such as greater cooperation across the value chain, implementing comprehensive modules on electric vehicles into education and training systems, ensuring sufficient space in buildings for charging points, and extended standardisation will all facilitate the deployment of EV infrastructure now while building the framework necessary for the mainstreaming of electric vehicles.

AIE and electrical contractors across Europe are ready to share their expertise and install efficient and sustainable EV infrastructure – national authorities now have to ensure that electricians have the right tools to build the EV revolution.

Read the full position paper [here](#).

Learn more about the [Platform for Electro-mobility](#).

No weak links – increasing cooperation across the electrical value chain



On the 21-23 June in Bonn, Giorgia Concas, Secretary General of AIE, and Karl-Heinz Bertram, Head of the Value Chain Task Force at AIE, had the pleasure of joining the European Union of Electrical Wholesalers (EUEW) for their 63rd annual convention.

With an impressive line-up of thought-leaders and influencers in the industry, this convention tackled all the developments, challenges and future trends for electrical wholesaling. Overall, electrical wholesalers, as well as the rest of the value chain, are currently experiencing a growth period as the economic crisis seems to be behind us and European society continues to electrify.

This is not the first time that AIE has supported the EUEW convention, as representatives have attended this event many times in the past and there has always been cooperation between the two associations.

However, more cooperation across the value chain is needed, now more than ever, as an increasingly fast-paced economy, the expansion of big technology companies, and the growth of digitalisation are all creating disruptions along the electrical value chain. While this offers many opportunities for the industry, in order to be successful in this new era, an inclusive transformation must take place.

It is clear that the three-phase value chain of manufacturers, wholesalers, and installers isn't going anywhere – yet, there seems to be space for improved data sharing across the chain, with digitalisation playing a key role in this flow of information and knowledge. As all points on the value chain are experiencing the same need to reinvent themselves in order to offer better services to their customers and improve their efficiencies, it only makes sense to do this collaboratively so as to take advantage of the expertise that each segment has to offer.

In the fall, AIE will ramp up its work for its Value Chain Task Force, exploring new and innovative spaces where the value chain can come together to boost the industry in Europe to remain competitive in the era of digitalisation and electrification.

If you have any questions about this task force please contact [Giorgia Concas](#) or [Karl-Heinz Bertram](#).

Fire safety is becoming a hot topic on the EU agenda



For several years at AIE, we have analysed the issue of domestic electrical safety in Europe along with other stakeholders from the building sector through the “FEEDS” (Forum for European Domestic Electric Domestic Safety) initiative.

According to data collected by this Forum, around 20 to 30% of domestic fires in the EU are caused by an electric source – this statistic is unnecessarily high, and will only increase unless serious measures are taken to promote electrical safety. As European society becomes more and more electrified, the number of electricity using or producing appliances in houses will increase, which inevitably means a growing risk of fire as more strain is pushed onto electrical installations.

A number of initiatives at the EU level show that fire safety, including the important topic of electrical installations, is climbing higher on the EU agenda.

First, following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the EU commission established the Fire Information Exchange Platform (FIEP). This Platform was set-up to stimulate cooperation by exchanging information and best practices among EU countries and relevant stakeholders on the topic of fire safety.

The Platform is now amping up its work with a soon-to-be established secretariat supported by two project teams; one team focusing on the exchange of Member States experiences with fire accidents and the other focusing on the exchange of Member States experiences on the regulatory fire safety approach for new products and tall buildings.

A second initiative on fire safety is coming from the EU Parliament, whose industry committee recently asked to amend the EU Budget 2019 to earmark funds for data collection purposed in order to better understand the causes of fire in Europe. Leading this initiative is MEP Bendt Bentsen, who has been the EU Parliament rapporteur on the new Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).

Speaking of the EPBD, this is the third important milestone towards increased EU focus on fire safety. In this revamped Directive, Articles 2 and 7 in the legislation both encourage Member States to integrate specific measures that consider fire safety in parallel to the measures taken to improve the energy performance and renovation of buildings.

While fire safety might be on old flame for AIE, the EU is now taking steps to make it a priority on the European agenda with these three initiatives. AIE is thrilled that this hot topic is getting the attention it deserves and will be their to support the EU to put out the fire in regards to electrical installations and fire safety.

European News

- Euractiv: [Clean transport boosts mobility, environment, local labour markets](#)
- Quartz: [Europe keeps setting clean-energy records](#)
- EU News: [Employment and Social Developments in Europe: 2018 review confirms positive trends but highlights challenges, in particular linked to automation and digitalisation](#)
- SciTech Europa: [€90m of finance for Maltese businesses via the SME initiative](#)
- EU News: [Posting of workers: final vote on equal pay and working conditions](#)

Member News

- ECA: [Grenfell: one year on](#)
 - FFIE: [Deploying the optical fiber: the sector and the public authorities mobilised](#)
 - Installatörsföretagen: [New agreement for electrical installer services is being launched](#)
 - NELFO: [Contribute to new solutions for the transport sector](#)
 - SELECT: [SELECT calls for more stringent controls on electrical safety in privately rented accommodation](#)
 - ZVEH: [News on the tightening of the Temporary Employment Act](#)
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Upcoming European Events

- 11-12 September 2018 June 2018: [World Summit on Digital Built Environment WDBE](#)
- 16-22 September 2018: [EU Mobility Week](#)
- 26-28 September 2018: [Euroskills 2018](#)
- 5-9 November 2018: [EU Vocational Skills Week](#)
- 13-16 November 2018: [Matelec - International Trade Fair for the Electrical and Electronics Industry](#)

Upcoming AIE Events

- 20 September 2018: [BIM Working Group Meeting](#)
 - 20 September 2018: [Policy Coordination Committee Meeting](#)
 - 20 September 2018: [Joint PCC and GSC Meeting](#)
 - 20 September 2018: [Joint AIE and GCP Europe Meeting](#)
 - 19-22 September 2018: [Installers' Summit 2018](#)
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European Association of Electrical Contractors - The Voice of Electrical Contractors in Europe

Who we are:

For over 60 years, the European Association for Electrical Contractors (AIE) has represented the interests of electrical contractors from 15 different countries at the EU-level. The AIE works as a network to exchange information and best practices for electrical contractors between its members and to inform policy makers to ensure all electricity is installed safely and efficiently in Europe.

For more information, visit our website: www.aie.eu or send us an [email](#).