

## New study: Better schools, hospitals and offices key to improve European citizens' health, well-being and productivity

Brussels, Belgium, November 26, 2018: Investing in the renovation of offices, schools and hospitals would greatly improve the health, well-being and productivity of European citizens, according to a new study launched today by Buildings 2030 and conducted by the Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE).

The study finds that a holistic people-centric renovation of a typical office building can lead to up to a **12% increase in productivity**. At a European scale, that could be **worth up to €500 billion**.

In **schools** with optimal indoor climate, students achieve the same results **2 weeks faster**. Students' academic performance could be improved by between **2% and 8%** with optimal temperature, lighting, noise levels and air quality. The time gained could be used for extracurricular activities, holidays or to raise the educational performance further.

**Hospital patients'** recovery time can be reduced by **10% on average** due to improved indoor environmental quality, and **11% if optimal lighting** is also provided. Put simply, average length of stay in hospitals (currently over a week) can be **reduced by around 1 day** resulting in a societal benefit of **nearly €50bn**.

In Europe, **90 million children** and young people spend their weekdays in schools, colleges and universities. More than **one in three of the working population** are office-based. And every year, **90 million patients spend more than a week** on average in hospitals. Yet, the impact of buildings on people's health, well-being and performance is not well-defined, measured or monetised to improve the daily lives of all Europeans.

*"The link between better buildings and healthier people is obvious in many cases, but this value is mostly ignored in political or business decisions. Effective valorisation tools could change this for the better."* **Oliver Rapf, Executive Director, BPIE**

*"This is an opportunity for a broader group of stakeholders, including the HR community, health insurers, national health services, impact investors, and technology companies to call for people-centric buildings that bring benefits to all Europeans."* **Rodolphe Nicolle, Executive Director, Buildings 2030**

*"If real estate developers want to create work environments which are sought after, it is essential to understand the needs the workforce of the 4th industrial revolution has. This workforce is very much knowledge based, working in highly demanding jobs. This is why, now more than ever, companies are looking for offices where their employees can feel at their very best. Creating healthy and inspiring environments lies at the very core of EDGE Technologies' product."* **Sandra Gritti, Product Excellent Director, EDGE Technologies.**

*"Energy efficiency is an objective and a means for climate action but also for public health. Knowing the impact building structures and materials can have on health means it will be easier to seize them as a health opportunity. The next European Commission will also have to take another detailed look into this matter which affects all Europeans."* **Vijoleta Gordeljevic, Health and Climate Change Coordinator, Health and Environment Alliance.**

The study, conducted by the Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE), is based on a review of more than 400 academic articles, dozens of case studies and expert interviews focusing on health, wellbeing and productivity in buildings. This research takes the first step at defining, measuring, quantifying and monetising the impact of indoor air quality, thermal comfort, acoustics, controls and lighting on students, office workers and patients across Europe.

Offices account for 23% of the total floor area of Europe's non-residential buildings, educational buildings comprise 17% with healthcare buildings accounting for 7%. Existing hospitals, schools and offices will still be with us for decades to come, yet the vast majority of European buildings need to be renovated to improve their energy performance.

The study can be downloaded at <https://www.buildings2030.com/spotlight/study/>

#### **About Buildings 2030:**

***Buildings 2030 [www.buildings2030.com] is a non-profit platform promoting healthy and sustainable buildings. Our vision is for all buildings in Europe to provide people with comfortable, healthy and productive spaces, while minimizing their carbon footprint. The health and built environment sectors work together towards this common ambition.***

#### **About BPIE**

***The Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE) is a European not-for-profit think-tank with a focus on independent analysis and knowledge dissemination, supporting evidence-based policy-making in the field of energy performance in buildings. It delivers policy analyses, policy advice and implementation support. For more information visit [www.bpie.eu](http://www.bpie.eu)***

*"Knowing that over 90% of the buildings that are standing and occupied today will still be standing and occupied in 2050, should lead politicians to the realisation that holistic energy renovation of our building stock is essential" said **Adrian Joyce, Director of the Renovate Europe Campaign** "When added to the realisation that great health, well-being and productivity gains will also result from energy renovation, the urge to get going should be unstoppable!"*

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