

**THE ROMANIAN ENERGY CENTER ASSOCIATION ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INNOVATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ORGANIZED BY TECHNOLOGY ENABLED CONSTRUCTION CLUSTER**25<sup>th</sup> of May 2021, Carina Ioana ZIDARU

The representatives of the Romanian Energy Center (CRE) Association actively contributed to the discussion and participated at the Online International Conference on Innovation in the Construction Industry entitled - „**INNOCONSTRUCT**”, on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2021. The **INNOCONSTRUCT** Conference, in its first edition, organized by Technology Enabled Construction (TEC) Cluster, focused on accelerating Digitalization in general and in construction in particular, as the first priority for increasing the level of Innovation.

**TEC Cluster** was established in 2019, around the common goal of members to increase the competitiveness of the construction industry through innovation and digital transformation. One of the cluster's goals is to contribute to the European agenda on the accelerated digitalization of industry by 2030 and to increase the level of innovation and integration of advanced digital technologies in the construction sector.

The conference brought together over 180 participants representing universities from different countries, large companies and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from different segments of the industry, but also from the IT industry, representatives of the European Commission (EC), government, regional authorities, social partners and relevant NGOs, construction and IT clusters from different Member States and representatives of professional bodies and networks.

The main objective of the **INNOCONSTRUCT** Conference aimed at engaging different stakeholders in cross-domain topics such as: standardization; the integration of Building Information Modeling (BIM) on a larger scale across the value chain; digital signature; cybersecurity and associated threats; the integration of advanced digital technologies for smart and energy efficient buildings and for greener processes, and education for a digital and green industry.

The International Conference followed three consecutive panels lead by high profile experts from cross-domain topics. **CRE** Association actively contributed to the panel discussion entitled „**Building Smartly Smart Communities, Integration of Digital Technologies for Smart and Energy Efficient Buildings and for Greener Processes. Education for a Digital and Green Industry**”. Dr. Mihai PAUN - Manager Development and Innovation of CRE, highlighted the main actions of the **European Green Deal**: „*The EC has launched this programme with the objective of making Europe climate neutral by 2050. EC made €1 billion available under the Green Deal Call to boost the green and digital transition – the biggest call under the Horizon 2020 program. We are actively taking part in this programme, supported by the EC, under the Horizon 2020 program. The Energy System Integration needs a strategy, this strategy exists, and we are all aware of significant challenges ahead. Our representatives in the Power Sector and our Association as well, are making efforts to transform those challenges into opportunities. There is a strong need for interconnection and market coupling at the European level, coherent energy systems and cooperation between gas, electricity, heat, telecommunication, construction and transport sectors*”.

„*CRE promotes Synergies amongst the Construction, Telecommunications, Energy and Transport sectors in terms of ICT, Digitalization, and Infrastructure Development. Our association encourages close collaboration amongst these sectors, to use resources efficiently and effectively and supports more interaction with all Utilities active in those sectors, in order to present results of Innovation Projects and how they can evolve their own Business using the results*”, underlined Mihai PAUN.

„*The European Green Deal set up the policy and instruments to transform EU's economy for a sustainable future and Smart Grids as an important element for the transition towards the Energy System Integration strategy and we are talking here about Digital Transformation of the Power Sector, which is very much linked with the consolidation of the Grid through Smarter Elements. Looking ahead towards a clean, affordable, and secure European Energy Sector, the deployment of Smart Grids calls for more actions in the implementation of clear procedures for access to data, interoperability requirements, cybersecurity and synergies with other sectors. The role of Research and Innovation is very important, and all emerging technologies will be easier to be integrated in the system by using more innovative solutions and products*”, pointed out Mihai PAUN in his final remarks.

CRE Association is constantly preoccupied and interested in the cybersecurity domain, also in the development of cybersecurity toolkits for critical infrastructure for the benefit of its members. The association is also very active to find solutions to improve awareness of cyber threats and attacks for the Power Energy Infrastructure. After six years of intensive activity of the **Innovation and Development Department**, CRE is among the top ten Romanian Organizations from over three thousand entities that managed to win European funding, with a total exceeding four million euros, according to the **statistics** of the EC. CRE already implemented **SUCCESS** Project and is currently implementing other cybersecurity projects in which the Innovation and Development Department has a significant contribution. **PHOENIX** Project – „**Electrical Power System's Shield against complex incidents and extensive cyber and privacy attacks**”, started in 2019 and it will end in 2022. The main objective of the project is to improve the cybersecurity of European Power Energy System (EPES).

CRE Association is an active and strategic partner together with its members and other potential members in international consortia for deploying energy projects funded by the EC, such as: **CROSSBOW**, **PHOENIX**, **TRINITY**, **EDDIE**, **EDGEFLEX**, **SUCCESS**, **RESERVE**, **NRG5**, **WISEGRID**, **SOGNO** and **CYBERSEAS**.

