



Circular economy in construction: Call for an expert platform for circular materials, products and buildings

Brussels, 20th May 2019 – With a shared goal of putting circular thinking at the heart of the construction sector, major European construction actors have come together with environmental and standardisation stakeholders to jointly request a comprehensive strategy on circular economy in construction. This strategy should take into account the relevant opportunities and challenges, develop circularity goals and work towards greater coherence of existing policy objectives and initiatives.

Made up of more than 3 million enterprises, the construction sector generates about 9 % of EU gross domestic product and provides 18 million direct jobs. But the importance of the sector goes even beyond that. Indeed, construction enterprises play a fundamental role in the comfort and well-being of the European population by building and maintaining homes and commercial buildings.

At the same time, the sector produces Construction and Demolition Waste (CDW) accounting for 25-30 % of all waste created in the EU, making it one of the most significant waste streams. This is a challenge that all the signatories of the declaration "**Construction in the circular economy: Towards circular materials, products and buildings**" want to address, by joining forces to promote the objective of the European Commission's [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) which aims to make the EU economy circular.

FIEC's President of the Technical Commission (TEC), José-Michaël Chenu said "*FIEC has always supported the broad objectives of the Circular Economy Action Plan. As contractors, we have an important role to play, but we need support from national and local authorities, to ensure that efficient sorting and recycling infrastructure and services to be available in close proximity to construction sites*". He continued "*Market demand for secondary materials remains an issue and as long as clients are not ready to accept secondary materials, we will continue to face challenges. Therefore, a strategy designed to facilitate the implementation of EU objectives would be very welcome.*"

Through a number of legislative acts, voluntary initiatives, EU-funded research projects, and the Construction 2020 Thematic Group on "Sustainable use of natural resources", the European Union and relevant stakeholders have joined forces to better promote the sustainability of buildings and raise awareness on recycled/reused construction materials and products in recent years.

However, in order to make circular economy a reality in the construction sector, a comprehensive strategy is required, that includes an expert platform within the future construction policy initiative (currently "Construction 2020"). In calling for this, the signatories of the declaration have also put forward guiding principles for a coherent approach on circular construction and sustainable buildings, which can engage all stakeholders..

To read the full declaration, [click here](#)

Note to editors

Established in 1905, FIEC speaks for the European Construction industry. Through its 31 national member federations in 27 European countries (24 EU & EFTA and Turkey), it represents, without discrimination, construction enterprises

- Of all sizes (from one person builders/craftsmen and SMEs through to large international firms),
- From all building and civil engineering specialities,
- Engaged in all kinds of working methods (whether operating on the basis of a direct contract with the client, as general/main contractors or as sub-contractors).

This wide-ranging representativeness was officially recognised in several studies undertaken on behalf of the European Commission, so that since the creation of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue “Construction” in 1999, FIEC has been the Social Partner representing employers.

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