



PRESS RELEASE

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

Brussels, 27 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.

SBS Director Christel Davidson said: "There are still many hurdles ahead of us before the use of recycled materials and reused products in the construction sector can be increased. However, we need to act to ensure the sustainability of the construction sector and to enable the European Union to achieve its environmental commitments. In this context, standardisation can act as a facilitator by ensuring that recycled materials and reused products are treated in the same manner in all Member States. By signing the declaration, we show our willingness to become actors of the circular construction economy rather than mere spectators and we count on the future European Commission expert platform to focus on the current state of play, the role for products and buildings, the obstacles to overcome, and measures to support circularity".

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.

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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](#).

END

EDITORS' NOTES: Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in the standardisation process. SBS is co-financed by the European Commission and EFTA.
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Small Business Standards (SBS) is the European association representing and supporting small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) in the standardisation process, both at European and international levels.

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