

Constructing a Sustainable and Competitive Future for Europe's Construction Sector

EFCC's Manifesto for the EU legislative term 2024-2029

Construction is the second largest industrial ecosystem in the European Union in economic terms and as such it offers enormous potential to contribute to the green and digital transformation of the EU industry. As the European Federation of Construction Chemicals (EFCC), we represent a sector that is essential to Europe's construction industry. Construction chemicals are integral to the built environment, influencing everything from energy efficiency to the durability and safety of buildings, therefore playing a critical role in achieving sustainability, innovation, and economic growth.

As newly elected and appointed European policymakers take office, we present the key priorities that we think could support a successful transition to a thriving, competitive and sustainable construction sector.

Ensuring a Predictable and Consistent Regulatory Environment

The European industry needs a regulatory environment that enables it to remain globally competitive. A stable regulatory framework is essential for innovation and investment. We call for

- **A Predictable Regulatory Environment:** Investments in green technologies and alternative chemicals require a predictable regulatory environment. Industry needs clear and upfront indications on what restrictive requirements will be introduced to foster confidence and encourage significant and long-term investments in innovative solutions.
- **Consistency across legislative requirements:** The legislative requirements should be consistent across all legislations and not contain overlapping or conflicting requirements that may overburden the industry.
The timely publication of the harmonised European Standards for the construction sector could accelerate the uptake of state-of-the art solutions.
- **Harmonized enforcement of regulations:** Divergent national implementation and enforcement of EU legislation can fragment the Single Market and hinder the construction sector's growth. The new Construction Products Regulation (CPR) addresses some of these issues, but more needs to be done to achieve EU-wide alignment, ensure consistent application across member states and remove remaining barriers that impede cross-border trade and innovation.

- **Ensuring Fair Competition:** All products, whether imported or produced within the EU, must meet the same high standards. This will prevent market distortions and ensure a level playing field for European businesses.

Aligning with the European Green and Digital transition

The European Green Deal is a cornerstone of Europe's growth strategy and the construction sector is central to its success. We are committed to implementing the green and digital transition, but this should be backed up with a sound industrial strategy. For the successful transition the following also need to be considered:

- More **demand is needed for sustainable construction** solutions, which requires stronger incentives to promote green initiatives. The EU should support investment in infrastructure and housing projects that prioritize sustainable construction. Such projects could also demonstrate Europe's leadership in developing a modern and sustainable construction sector.
Public investments should not focus solely on cost but prioritize projects that utilize sustainable construction practices, with incentives for the adoption of green technologies and materials. This will drive demand for sustainable materials and innovative construction technologies and as such contribute to the EU's sustainability and climate goals.
- **Integration of Circular Economy Principles:** We support the shift towards a circular economy and accelerating the scale-up of circular economy solutions to reduce our dependence on imports. However, the EU policies should offer realistic solutions for recycling and waste management. In addition, EU policies must address the specific challenges of construction chemicals, as they are often embedded in construction materials and can be difficult or even impossible to separate from building materials at the end of their life.
- **Digitalisation** is key to modernizing the construction sector. The EU should promote digital tools and solutions that enhance the efficiency and sustainability of construction while safeguarding companies' intellectual property and ensuring that digital tools do not compromise business confidentiality.

Conclusion

The construction chemicals sector is vital to building a sustainable and resilient future for Europe. We urge European policymakers to engage with industry stakeholders to create a regulatory environment that supports innovation, competitiveness, and sustainability, and secures access to necessary raw materials.

Together, we can ensure that Europe's construction sector continues to lead globally, while contributing to the EU's environmental and economic goals and strengthening our common values.

