

Follow-up actions on the Communication and Action Plan Construction 2020¹

DRAFT REPORT

From the High Level Tripartite Strategic Forum

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¹ COM(2012) 433 final "Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises"

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Construction 2020

Construction 2020 is aimed at identifying and implementing measures that help fostering sustainable competitiveness in the construction sector in the short as well as in the medium to long term. It intends to define sound conditions on a general level for investment, research, innovation, entrepreneurship, higher resource efficiency and work environment. It also encourages actions to reassure and ameliorate the functioning of the Internal Market and help remove barriers to trade and business at international level. The potential of the European construction sector can largely be developed through existing EU instruments and strategies. During 2013, the EC has facilitated the development of a governance structure comprising of a High Level Strategic Forum (HLF) and 5 Thematic Groups (TGs) to address the various actions presented in the Construction 2020 Action Plan. This bottom up approach has provided Member States and stakeholders representatives with the opportunity for expressing their views with regards to the implementation of the various actions.

Key recommendations – "Stimulating investment in building renovation, infrastructure and innovation"

In order to stimulate the demand for energy efficiency and infrastructure upgrading the HLF recommends to better align the existing EU instruments for sustainable building renovation and infrastructure maintenance. Moreover, in order to capitalise on research programmes, the HLF suggests to give priority to demonstration projects and market oriented activities fostering the take-up of new knowledge and innovative approaches in building renovation and infrastructure maintenance. Specific recommendations are:

1. A **mapping should be carried out of the various market segments' needs** related to residential and non-residential buildings, and guidance developed on blending the various available financial instruments. Particular attention should be given to the residential sector and providing the technical assistance required to aggregate small projects into 'bankable' projects. A framework for EU wide metrics should allow the **appraisal of the cost-benefits of financial instruments and other policy initiatives**, in order to monitor implementation effectiveness.
2. Encourage the property valuation industry to **adopt internationally recognised valuation standards**, in particular those developed by the International Valuation Standards Committee and the European Group of Valuers' Association, and collect information to properly assess the **impact of sustainability on market** expectations, market value and fair value.
3. Use a **life cycle costing** approach to anticipate the maintenance costs during investment decisions. Apply the **user-pays principle** to finance infrastructure maintenance and upgrading; ensure that funds collected are earmarked for this purpose. In addition, the Group suggests **better appraisal of the sustainability of infrastructure projects** at the decision stage, especially regarding maintenance and upgrading.
4. Support innovative "**lighthouse**" **projects** addressing various market segments and project sizes to strengthen synergies between public funds and private investors. Develop a **quality assurance** strategy specific to the respective needs of new materials, technology and services to ensure their take up by the market and insurance coverage.
5. Support **active ageing schemes**, both via an adapted building stock and by facilitating continued employment of older workers in construction.

Key recommendations – "Skills & Qualifications"

The HLF suggests to strengthen the implementation of existing EU and MS instruments to ensure suitably qualified and sufficiently numerous human resources for energy-efficient building renovation and infrastructure maintenance. European quality assurance schemes should facilitate the mobility of workers and construction professionals and increase the attractiveness of the sector to young talents.

6. **Support and extend the BUILD UP Skills initiative** (Pillar I & II) to cover building and construction site professionals and include other stages of the property lifecycle such as construction, building operation and management. In particular, identify which national issues may benefit from similar solutions at regional or EU level. The group also recommends to **review the eligibility for funding measures for training to ensure fair access** for all

workers, professionals and sizes of enterprise, especially for SMEs. The aim is to stimulate partnerships for trainings needs at regional and local level. In addition, the group should **provide guidelines for developing partnerships** to optimise uptake of training.

7. Provide **guidelines for developing partnerships** to optimise uptake of training. **Encourage training for jobs in the green economy**, and tapping potential new personnel streams. The group should also **review existing EU level initiatives and partnerships that support training** to compile and spread good practice.
8. **Facilitate mobility of workers and construction professionals** by following up the development and implementation of assessment tools and registries (professional cards), in construction. Finally, it was proposed to study Health & Safety innovative practices in the sector to spread good practice.

Key recommendations – "Sustainable use of natural resources"

The HLF suggests to improve the comparability of the various existing methods for the assessment of the building environmental performances and to promote a single structure for the assessment of the environmental performance of construction products. Moreover, the factual information basis regarding C&D waste needs to be improved together with the promotion of assessment tools for material efficiency.

9. Encourage the creation of an EU framework for **building assessment** in terms of evaluation/comparability of the environmental performance of buildings. Promote a single structure for the **assessment of the environmental performance of construction products** building based on existing environmental assessment tools and European standards. Use existing instruments within the framework of ESI Funds and Horizon 2020 to **incentivise resource efficiency** in the construction sector. Consider Green Public Procurement as a tool to increase demand for sustainable buildings. Using **communication tools**, increase awareness/ knowledge about integrated design and sustainable buildings amongst different actors. **Collect data to assess building /product sustainability**. Consider feedback from buildings in operation, and transparent communication of operating data, to gain valuable information for future investment.
10. Explore ex-ante assessment of buildings prior to demolition to identify viable/potential opportunities to facilitate maximizing the **valorisation of Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste**. Identify **economic instruments that provide incentives for recycling C&D waste**. Improve the recycling infrastructure throughout Europe by **clarifying definitions** in the context of the Waste Framework Directive. Develop a realistic target for C&D waste recycling based on sound waste management statistics.

Key recommendations – "Internal Market"

The HLF confirms that there is a need to assess the cumulative burden of EU legislation on construction products and service businesses. Further improved use of Eurocodes could also be beneficial for the Internal Market of construction services. Based upon the experiences gathered at MS level of market surveillance for construction products, the HLF puts emphasis on the need to guarantee enough resources by MS to ensure quality in the European construction industry. The HLF also suggests to assess how

Member States have progressed with the integration of provisions related to sustainability in national building regulations and codes.

11. With regard to "**Fitness check**", assess the overall consistency and coherence of EU legal acts imposing obligations on the construction sector to identify/avoid/remove provisions creating overlaps, inconsistencies, obsolete measures or excessive cumulative burden. This does not aim at deregulation. Priority areas would be: the Internal market, Environment; Energy efficiency; Health and safety.
12. Develop a comprehensive **network of national contact points for construction products and services** to provide harmonised, consistent and accessible information on **EU and national legislation** related to construction products and services, **covering both national and cross-border services**². Insurance for cross border services in construction. Facilitate the provision of insurance for cross border services based on the definition of common criteria for the assessment of equivalence of insurances and flexible conditions for temporary cross-border services.
13. Ensure that **Eurocodes** are more widely used in the EU, including in public procurement. Explore possibilities of **further clarification**, simplification, harmonisation and evolution of Eurocodes.
14. **Ensure effective market surveillance** of construction products, including legislative simplification. **Encourage MS to assign the necessary resources** and to guarantee proper market surveillance at national and regional level.
15. **Assess legislative sustainability provisions** in Member States: gather preliminary views about the aspects to be considered in relation to the EU internal market.

Key recommendations – "International Competitiveness"

The HLF suggests to strengthen the promotion of EU construction industry know-how at international level and to maximize benefits of trade negotiations. Moreover, the HLF welcomes the current support measures and schemes for the internationalisation of EU construction SMEs and is keen to contribute to the development of possible new support measures and schemes.

16. **Focusing future work and collaboration** with international partners. Due to the particularities of trade in the construction sector, **a well-targeted selection of potential partner countries** for intensifying cooperation is necessary.
17. The Group recommends to the EU institutions, together with Member States, to address the issue of **access to finance and guarantees**, notably for trade and investment with high-risk regions and those where European companies suffer from unfair competition. Foster during the next programming period (2014-2020) the **participation of the private sector in EU External Aid projects** through blending mechanisms, in line with G20/8 conclusions and respecting OECD Rules.
18. **Foster the international cooperation on regulation and standards beyond Eurocodes** notably to include construction products and professional qualifications.

² Communication on Services COM (2012) 261 final "A partnership for new growth in services"

Priorities for 2014

In 2014, Construction 2020 and the HLF should aim to focus on four (4) main priorities:

2.1. Follow-up the suggested recommendations by the HLF (Section 1 of this document):

HLF Members are expected to ensure leadership, commitment and adequate resources are allocated to the implementation of the agreed recommendations. In parallel, a Commission EC Task Force involving various EC services will analyse to which extent existing policies and initiatives are responding to the HLF recommendations and assess the need to launch possible new actions.

2.2. Initiate Action Plan measures that have not yet been covered:

Stimulating favourable investment conditions

Actions associated with this objective aim to stimulate investment in the construction sector, particularly in renovation activities, and to improve the sector's capacity to innovate.

- Mapping of implementation of the financial instruments and mechanisms at MS level, including the expertise of the of the financial sector for sustainable construction/renovation
- Mapping of national permit granting process for TENs cross border sections from a technical perspective (to be further developed).
- Other ESI Funding mechanisms that could foster research-innovation-procurement, , interregional clusters, etc. to speed up the uptake of new knowledge and technologies at EU and regional levels in the construction sector.

Improving the human capital basis

Actions associated with this objective aim to gage skills and qualifications needs in the construction sector and to adapt training accordingly; to improve training and mobility options for workers in the sector; to increase sector attractiveness and to help harmonise qualifications across the EU.

- All actions have been covered under the scope of the actual recommendations issued. Thus, no new action in this field is envisaged.

Improving resource efficiency, environmental performance and business opportunities

Actions associated with this objective aim to harmonise understanding of sustainable and green buildings, to align assessment methods and to develop and exchange best practices to promote resource efficiency, improve environmental performance and promote life cycle thinking in the sector.

- Assessment of hindrances resulting from national legislation governing, the authorisation process for major construction projects, with a view to identifying good practices for streamlining the procedures, (with a particular view on the on-going revision of the EIA Directive).

Strengthening the Internal Market for Construction

Actions associated with this objective aim to facilitate cross-border provision of services and develop a common approach to product and building standards.

- All actions have been covered under the scope of the actual recommendations issued. Thus, no new action in this field is envisaged.

Fostering the global competitive position of EU construction enterprises

Actions associated with this objective aim to strengthen the EU construction sector's position in the global market, notably by facilitating international competitiveness of SMEs, promoting European standards beyond the EU and setting priorities for international collaboration to foster market access for construction products and the provision of services. Special attention should be paid to capitalise European political leadership in regards to the climate agenda

- Further collaboration with 3rd countries around sustainable construction, including in public procurement, both from a B2B perspective as well as with regards to regulation and standardisation.
- Possible sub-group to identify information and analytical needs in terms of trade flows and exports/investment opportunities for construction products/solutions/technologies

2.3. Communication Strategy:

Establish links with other EU-institutions, and platforms, think-tanks, forums at MS level that share the thematic spirit of the "Construction 2020 Action Plan":

The HLF suggests that a communication strategy is developed regarding its messages and the activities and reports from the Thematic Groups. In particular, this strategy should reflect on dissemination channels for the specific recommendations at national and regional levels which will play a prominent role in the implementation of Construction 2020 in the coming year(s).

While opportunities for communication are diverse, a way forward could be dissemination:

- In written form via EU communication outlets (news items, memos, website, etc.)
- At relevant national and international construction forums or other similar events gathering a variety of key affected stakeholders
- National or regional construction forums in particular may present an interesting opportunity for the HLF to present its recommendations and interact with relevant stakeholders³. The High Level Forum is invited to inform the Commission about those national forums which seem most appropriate for the communication strategy.
- Liaison with the European Investment Bank, European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee⁴ and the Committee of the Regions.

³ For reference, a selection of upcoming construction forums in the EU is provided in a separate Annex below (Annex B: Selection of EU and non-EU 2014 construction forums).

⁴ In particular regarding the opinion raised by the EESC on the COM(2012)433 final, <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.ccmi-opinions.25196>

- Whenever appropriate for improving the capacity building of the Thematic Groups and the High Level Forum, other key stakeholders will be involved, amongst others, national administrations in charge of construction related affairs, professional associations and business federations representing the financial and real estate sectors.

Section 3: 2014 Agenda of TGs and HLF

In order to pursue the implementation of the sustainable construction strategy, several meetings of the thematic groups and one of the High Level Forum will be organised in 2014.

For each Thematic Group two meetings are scheduled to take place in Brussels: one in April 2014, and the other one in September 2014. Further, the annual meeting of the HLF is expected to be organised in December 2014. While only one HLF meeting will take place in 2014 (in contrast to the two meetings that took place in 2013), the EC could help to arrange web-based meetings and webinars in order to facilitate HLF collaboration throughout the year.

A provisional meeting calendar for 2014 is presented below. All meetings are tentatively scheduled to last from 10 am to 5 pm and will be held in Brussels.

Calendar: Construction 2020 meetings 2014

Group	Meeting	Tentative Date
Thematic Group 1	Meeting 3	Tuesday, 1 April 2014
Thematic Group 2	Meeting 3	Thursday, 3 April 2014
Thematic Group 3	Meeting 3	Tuesday, 8 April 2014
Thematic Group 4	Meeting 3	Wednesday, 9 April 2014
Thematic Group 5	Meeting 3	Wednesday, 2 April 2014
Thematic Group 1	Meeting 4	Tuesday, 9 September 2014
Thematic Group 2	Meeting 4	Thursday, 11 September 2014
Thematic Group 3	Meeting 4	Tuesday, 16 September 2014
Thematic Group 4	Meeting 4	Wednesday, 17 September 2014
Thematic Group 5	Meeting 4	Thursday, 18 September 2014
High Level Strategic Forum	Yearly meeting (meeting 3)	Tuesday, 2 nd Dec. 2014 (tbc)

Annex A: Initiatives relevant to Construction 2020, proposed examples

What initiatives?

Construction forums tend to have a business-to-business focus, attracting construction professionals such as architects, contractors, installers, energy professionals, developers, engineers and consultants, as well as public sector representatives, land owners and trade associations, among others.




The EC welcomes relevant multi-stakeholder initiatives, regional or national, whose activities fall under the scope of the Construction 2020 Action Plan. These initiatives may bring together a variety of key construction actors (e.g. contractors, professionals, workers, suppliers, clients, etc.) to discuss broad or specific issues related to sustainable construction. They may also directly involve or interface with public sector representatives in order to drive growth and sustainability collaboratively in the construction. Multi-stakeholder initiatives sometimes also involve NGOs whose activities focus on climate change, energy use or sustainable building, as well as scientific or technical experts who provide technical expertise and advice.

Relevant public, private and joint public-private initiatives exist in a number of Member States. Their scope may be limited to very specific activities, such as developing building performance assessment systems, or may encompass a number of activities (policy development, awareness raising, training and capacity buildings, etc.) within an overall objective of promoting increasingly sustainable construction.







Selected examples of Member State-level initiatives and multi-stakeholder organisations share:

- Their holistic approach in line with the overall spirit of the Construction 2020 Action Plan
- They receive a desirable certain degree of institutional support/recognition

Proposed examples⁵:

LOGO	EU-28	Initiative	Description	Web
	BE	CLUSTER ECO BUILD (Belgian Sustainable Building Council)	The Ecobuild Cluster, is one of the projects set up by Brussels-Capital Region to promote sustainable construction and renovation, especially as a response to the effects of climate change. It is part of a strategy of Sustainable Development which promotes the creation, growth and long life of companies.	http://www.cluster-ecobuild.com/us/ecobuild-cluster (EN, FR and NL)
	DK	Future Industrialized Sustainable Construction and Urban Development	The FISH program aims to provide a new and innovative business model to boost Danish presence in the foreign market for sustainable buildings and urban development. The program is specifically focused on driving market presence in China, Germany and Norway for Danish suppliers of technology for buildings and districts, architects and advisors, as well as research institutions.	http://www.fishclusters.dk/ (EN/DK)
	FR	Institut Pour la Conception Ecoresponsable du Bâti	This organisation brings together a variety of sustainable construction experts in France, including professionals in the construction, architecture, urbanism, health and environmental sectors.	http://www.asso-iceb.org/ (FR)

⁵ These examples do not represent any final choice made by the EC Services.

	FR	Association HQE	The Association HQE is non-profit association and platform for promoting sustainability in the construction sector. It brings together public and private actors and is responsible for the HQE certification scheme.	http://www.assohqe.org/ (FR)
	DE	Roundtable Sustainable Building and Information Portal on Sustainable Building	The Roundtable Sustainable Building serves as an advisory body to the Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMVBS), to support implementation of sustainable building activities. It consists of representatives from the building trade, industry, chambers of architects and engineers, the relevant building authorities and researchers. A related initiative is the Portal on Sustainable Buildings, which is a communication platform for public and private actors, which provides information and promotes communication on sustainable	https://www.bnb-nachhaltigesbauen.de/netzwerk.html (DE)
	ES	Fundacion la Casa que Ahorra	Forum created by different construction leaders, which aims to promote sustainability in the Spanish construction market. It further collaborates with a number of public institutions.	http://www.lacasaqueahorra.org/inicio (ES)
None	ES	Foro del Ciclo Integral de la Construcción	The Confederación Nacional de la Construcción (CNC) is a business organization that involves the main construction organisations in Spain, from construction companies to promoters and industrial enterprises. The group has signed an agreement called Foro del ciclo integral de la construcción , which brings together industry and trade unions.	http://www.portal-cnc.com (ES)
	UK	Strategic Forum for Construction	The Strategic Forum for Construction brings together the key actors of the UK construction sector. It further interfaces with the UK government on behalf of the sector. Sustainable construction is one of the key interests of the Forum, with a dedicated SFfC Sustainable Construction Task Group driving work on this subject.	http://www.strategicforum.org.uk/ (EN)
	UK	Construction Industry Council	Representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist business associations in the UK construction industry.	http://www.cic.org.uk/ (EN)
	UK	Green Construction Board	The Green Construction Board brings together government and industry representatives and was established to drive implementation of the “ Low Carbon Construction Action Plan ”. The Board also works more broadly on green construction issues and relevant policy development and implementation.	http://www.greenconstructionboard.org/ (EN)



Annex B: Selection of EU and non-EU 2014 construction forums

Selection of European national construction forums

Logo	Forum	Country	2014 date (some dates may be tentative)
	World Sustainable Buildings 2014	Barcelona	October 28/30th 2014
	Haus-Bau-Energie	Germany	Several dates in Jan / Feb 2014 (different cities)
	Bauen + Wohnen Salzburg	Austria	6 – 9 February 2014
	Bauen & Energie Wien	Austria	13 – 16 February 2014
	Energie Dresden	Germany	27 February – 1 March 2014
	Ecobuild	UK	4 - 6 March 2014
	CEB Stuttgart (Clean Energy Building)	Germany	6 – 8 March 2014
	Building Trade and Home Renovation	Finland	14 – 16 March 2014
	Écobat	France	19 – 21 March 2014
	Bluebat	France	April 2014

	Nordbygg	Sweden	1 – 4 April 2014
	Innovative Building	France	8 – 10 April 2014
	Haus-Holz-Energie Stuttgart	Germany	11 – 13 April 2014
	Building Holland	Holland	6 – 8 May 2014
	Construtec	Spain	6 – 9 May 2014
	Clean Energy Building Budapest	Hungary	15 -16 October 2014
	Baumesse Bad Kreuznach	Germany	17 – 19 October 2014
	Construire Naturel	France	21 – 23 October 2014
	Artibat	France	22-24 October 2014
	Restructura	Italy	27 – 30 November 2014

Selection of international and non-EU construction forums

Logo	Forum	Country	2014 date (some dates may be tentative)
	World ECO Construct / INTERMAT	United Arab Emirates	14 -16 January 2014
	Green Building Expo	Qatar	28 – 30 January 2014

	ECO House & ECO Building EXPO	Japan	26 – 28 February 2014
	Building Lasting Change	Canada	2 – 4 June 2014
	Greenbuilding Brasil	Brazil	26 – 28 August 2014
	Construir Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	1 – 4 October 2014
	GBC - Green Building China	China	14 – 16 October 2014
	Greenbuild EXPO	USA	8 – 10 November 2014