



FIEC was granted the COP 21 label for the conference on 4th December 2015 in Paris:
"Climate change: Solutions from the construction industry"



EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY FEDERATION

CLIMATE CHANGE CONSTRUCTION SOLUTIONS:

1. Promote energy efficiency of Europe's built environment
2. Strengthen cities' and territories' resilience to climate change
3. Promote low carbon and climate resilient infrastructure and buildings
4. Encourage contractual innovation
5. Promote technical and technological innovation
6. Focus financing on sustainability
7. Strengthen network interconnectivity
8. Support training and upgrading of skills
9. Encourage the use of low-carbon and recycled products
10. Engage with the circular economy



10 PROPOSALS TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE



1. Promote energy efficiency of Europe's built environment

WHAT THE INDUSTRY CAN DO

- Integrate technological solutions and/or processes such as combined insulation/heating/cooling plant improvements in existing buildings, smart grids etc., to enhance energy efficiency.

WHAT THE INDUSTRY CALLS FOR

- Develop a common European voluntary building assessment framework based on existing national standards and schemes and lessons learned processes;
- Implement fiscal measures, tax incentives (e.g. reduced level of VAT on energy efficiency works and components used in buildings) and financial instruments to encourage both private home owners and public authorities to undertake energy efficient renovation.

2. Strengthen cities' and territories' resilience to climate change

- Foster innovation in the construction processes and materials used for construction to achieve more resilience;
- Foster the adaptability/reversibility of projects;
- Make available the industry's knowledge and experience at early stages of planning.

- Encourage the sustainable communities of tomorrow and develop eco-cities and eco-districts through the rehabilitation of areas with minimum consumption of natural resources;
- Support the development and implementation of adaptation plans and their systematic integration within urban and territories planning. These plans shall include an assessment of vulnerability to climate change. In the case of territories of homogeneous habitat (water basins or mountain regions), the European Union should enhance cross-border cooperation.

3. Promote low carbon and climate resilient infrastructure and buildings

- Take into account climate change impact (existing and predicted) for the purpose of renovation and upgrading of existing infrastructure;
- Improve the carbon footprint of construction projects by using renewable fuels, increasing energy efficiency at construction sites, using smart logistics etc.

- Assess the quality of infrastructure through observatories in order to ensure a transport system that can tackle the issue of climate change;
- Encourage low CO₂ emissions from the construction process by demanding LCA and promote low emissions in public procurement.

4. Encourage contractual innovation

- Further develop Energy Performance Contracting (EPC), which facilitates funding of energy improvements from energy savings.

- Use public and private funding - both traditional and innovative instruments - including PPPs, to facilitate climate change projects;
- Define criteria for helping investors to identify projects that support the 2°C objective and the improvement in the resilience of territories.

5. Promote technical and technological innovation

- Increase research in the fields of climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Propose innovative solutions incorporating climate change (e.g. BIM).

- Facilitate the use of BIM through public procurement (cf directive on public procurement) and private markets for inclusive and coordinated management of construction projects by all stakeholders;
- Foster a strong EU commitment for the development of smart grids.

6. Focus financing on sustainability

WHAT THE INDUSTRY CAN DO

- Invest in climate-proof and economically sound projects.

WHAT THE INDUSTRY CALLS FOR

- Promote and secure “user pays” and “polluter pays” schemes in order to channel finance for the construction and maintenance of safe and sustainable infrastructures, contributing at the same time to climate change mitigation and/or adaptation;
- Encourage private investments through financial tools, such as climate funds to better share risks between the private and public sectors and to speed up low carbon investments;
- Dedicate European funds such as the Juncker investment plan and structural funds - to support projects dedicated to the adaptation to climate change at regional and local levels.

7. Strengthen network inter-connectivity

- Be available for networking and sharing technical knowledge across Europe.

- Implement a European Framework Programme for Energy Networks and Low-Carbon Technologies aimed at meeting energy and climate challenges;
- Facilitate energy interconnections of Europe-wide interest serving to underscore the challenge of energy supplies in terms of security, cost-efficiency and climate change risks.

8. Support training and upgrading of skills

- Increase and adapt skills required for climate-proofing buildings and infrastructure.

- Improve investment in vocational and professional training in the construction industry for the use of energy efficient or climate resilient techniques and the use of renewable energies on construction sites.

9. Encourage the use of low-carbon and recycled products

- Choose low carbon over high carbon materials and products with Environmental Product Declarations (only useful if these are being compared);
- Develop the quality and use of recycled materials and construction products.

- Implement financial incentives for the use of recycled materials.

10. Engage with the circular economy

- Promote the circular economy and reduce the amount of waste as a way to achieve resource efficiency and increase energy efficiency in construction processes.

- Plan for resource recovery by maximising water, energy and materials recovery and reuse, and promote the economic opportunities for resources recovered.

Aware of the challenge that climate change implies for European territories and citizens, the European construction industry, from SMEs to global companies, supports the European Union objectives to limit the extent of global warming to 2°C up until 2050.

The construction firms affiliated to FIEC's member federations all have the expertise and capacity to offer a wide range of traditional, creative and innovative solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Climate change threatens access to essential services needed by citizens: mobility, water, communication, information, accommodation, lighting, etc., potentially causing disruption and subsequently causing business losses and material damage, jeopardising human health, even threatening lives. Our companies can help to minimise the impact of climate change by maintaining permanent access to these services.

Therefore FIEC considers it extremely important to anticipate these risks by integrating future climate change scenarios in development and renovation schemes to build more resilient territories. By sharing their technical knowledge, being involved at an early stage in projects, construction companies can actively contribute to make the transformation happen.

To achieve these objectives, a significant share of investment will have to be reallocated and a long-term and predictable framework which encourages investments will have to be provided.

With this paper FIEC intends to intensify the dialogue and cooperation we have had for some time between construction companies and their stakeholders who will be represented during the conference "Climate change: Solutions from the construction industry" on 4th December in Paris during COP21. The conference represents a milestone in this process.



EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FEDERATION

FIEC speaks for the European construction industry.

Through its **30 national member federations in 27 European countries** (24 EU & EFTA and Turkey), it represents, **without discrimination**, construction enterprises

- of all sizes
- of all building and civil engineering specialties
- practising all kinds of working methods (whenever operating as general 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**.

The European construction industry contributes **8.8% to the EU GDP** and employs **14.1 million people in 3 million enterprises**, most of which are SMEs with less than 20 operatives.

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