

ADVOCACY REPORT

2024-25



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1. Foreword

For decades, the European woodworking and sawmill industries have operated in the context of a European forest that has been year on year increasing the amount of carbon it stores. As we seek to address climate change this has been good news. It has also helped us to address criticisms of commercial forestry as clearly timber is being removed from our forests in a sustainable way such that the forest's ability to function as a carbon sink has not been adversely impacted – a win-win.

Recently, Europe's forests have had a difficult few years resulting in some countries for some years reporting that their forests have been carbon emitters not carbon sinks. This news has been seized on by some to argue for an end to, or a significant reduction of, timber harvesting.

One of the main reasons these forest emissions have happened is the drought in 2018 and the subsequent reduction in forest growth and bark beetle infestations in certain areas. For some affected countries, like Germany, the outlook modelling shows that they will return to being a sink in the coming years and decades but at a lower level than before as there is a shift from planting previous coniferous tree species that are fast growing to more deciduous trees that grow more slowly. Some other regions were affected by unusually intense forest fire.

In response to this situation, we need to communicate that it is simply not true that the European forest is now a source of carbon emissions. This is only true for some countries for some years. At the EU level the forests are still an annual net sink. In 2023, the sink was even bigger than in 2022.

As we make this point, we must at the same time redouble our efforts to conclusively win the argument as to why felling trees sustainably and using wood as a substitute for more carbon-intensive materials can be good for the climate.

Carbon storage in Harvested Wood Products (HWPs) is needed for Europe to reach its carbon reduction targets. This argument has always been difficult to make because it is a paradox. Surely felling trees reduces, not increases, the amount of carbon stored? This would be the case if one hundred per cent of the timber generated by harvesting was immediately burnt, as the burning would release all the stored carbon. However, a large percentage has always made its way into HWPs, e.g. the timber used to construct homes, recognised under the LULUCF legislation as long term carbon storage.

The paradox is revealed when the sum of the carbon stored in a commercial forest, after a series of sustainable forest rotations (planting, felling, replanting) have been made, is added to the sum of the carbon stored in the HWP's that have been made with the timber harvested from the same forest. The resulting figure will be greater than the amount of carbon stored in the forest if it had never produced any timber and had been left unmanaged.

At the same time managing forests for timber production results in better structured forests, including the opportunity of planting more resilient species in anticipation of climate change.

The amount of time it takes for the harvested forest to store more carbon when combined with the HWP's it has produced is linked to the percentage of timber from each harvest that is used to manufacture HWP's - the greater the percentage the quicker, the smaller percentage the slower. We can therefore say with confidence that the climate science backs more timber in more buildings if our goal is to store more carbon.

Consequently, our advocacy work for the year ahead will need to have at its heart the climate benefits of timber's ability to substitute for carbon intensive alternatives and timber's ability to store carbon in the built environment. In so doing, we need to remind ourselves that we should never mention one without the other, substitution and storage should always come as a pair.

In making our arguments, we will be doing so in an EU environment which for the first time in the EU's history has taken on board the issue of housing. This is both a threat and an opportunity.

It is a threat because while the emerging strategy to address Europe's housing crisis will include a push to build significantly more homes, there is no guarantee that this will mean a greater use of wood. Why? Because large parts of the Commission continue to talk about 'material neutrality', including the staff in the newly formed Housing Task Force. Meanwhile in the Parliament, where 50 per cent of the MEPs following the election in 2024 are new, there is a low level of understanding that the dominant construction materials we currently use are a major cause of climate breakdown.

It is however also an opportunity for, if we can win the necessary arguments, including the central point that the climate and housing crises are 'joined at the hip' and best addressed together, then we could find that timber is at long last recognised as the number one climate friendly construction material. A material which can be deployed in such a way that every house that is built to help address the housing crisis is - because of the timber it contains - another contribution to tackling climate breakdown.

By making links between this opportunity and the New European Bauhaus, with its emphasis on sustainability, and with the latest bioeconomy strategy, with its emphasis on mobilising Europe's biological resources to substitute fossil-based materials, then we can help convey the message that more timber in more buildings can deliver multiple policy wins.

All this takes place against the backdrop of a Commission and Parliament that are seeking to improve Europe's competitiveness in relation to the wider world while at the same time maintaining the strong social dimension that has always existed in the EU's DNA. In so doing, they seek to ensure Europe's workforce has good quality jobs: a state of affairs that Europe's woodworking and sawmills industries have always supported and helped deliver for their own workforces.

Alas I must mention the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). In future, EUDR will be cited as a prime example of 'the law of unintended consequences'. No piece of legislation put forward by the EU has ever taken up so much of our members' time and caused so much work, disruption and uncertainty. This has been a serious issue especially when the industry is going through very challenging times as the construction activity has slowed down and demand for the industry's products is low. Hopefully, 2026 will deliver clarity and an injection of common sense resulting in us all being able to move forward.

To end on a positive note, while it is true that the economic conditions in most European countries are not yet in place to enable growth in the construction sector, the general view is that 2026 will see an improvement especially if we embrace a more confident outlook. The deployment at the heart of Europe of Germany's €500 billion budget for infrastructure and climate neutrality will stimulate economic activity well beyond Germany's borders. The pent-up demand for housing across Europe once released can act as a significant driver of growth. In turn, if we can collectively and successfully deploy our combined substitution and storage arguments, in the context of timber's ability to tackle climate breakdown and deliver sustainable housing, then we will find ourselves facing the welcome 'problem' of how to deliver this time next year on rapidly expanding order books.



Sampsa AUVINEN

Chairman of CEI-Bois

2

2 The European Confederation of the Woodworking Industries

2.1 Background and missions

Founded in 1952, CEI-Bois is the European Confederation of the Woodworking Industries. It is an international non-profit association, legally registered as an AISBL under the Belgian law.



The Confederation is based in Brussels and numbers 18 national organisations and 4 European sector federations.

The primary goal of CEI-Bois is to promote the interests of the European wood sector and to this end to contribute to the EU policy-making process. It is the main body representing the European woodworking industries at European and international level.

CEI-Bois' missions are to:

- promote the sector and the use of wood in its numerous forms and applications,
- represent and safeguard interests of the European woodworking industries,
- highlight the natural sustainability of wood and wood-based products.

The day-to-day management of CEI-Bois is performed by the secretariat in Brussels, supported by 5 working groups dealing with sustainability, social affairs, construction, innovation and trade issues.

Additional ad hoc task forces are established when needed. Currently, there are eight Task Forces on the topics of EU Affordable Housing, life-cycle assessment, fire, deforestation, volatile organic compound (VOC), Carbon Removals Certification, CLT Hub and TIMBIM.

2.2 Working groups

2.2.1 Construction Working Group

Timber products and a large variety of wood-based materials are increasingly being used in carbon and energy efficient construction. The overall aim of the Construction Working Group is to strengthen this position in European policies, regulatory affairs,

standardisation and research & innovation. The working group works on developing initiatives in accordance with the guiding objectives described below:

- Advocacy of the use of wood in construction and renovation, including prefabricated houses.
- Advocacy of the environmental and energy efficiency performance of wood in a life cycle approach framework.
- Active support for innovative wood-based materials and building concepts.

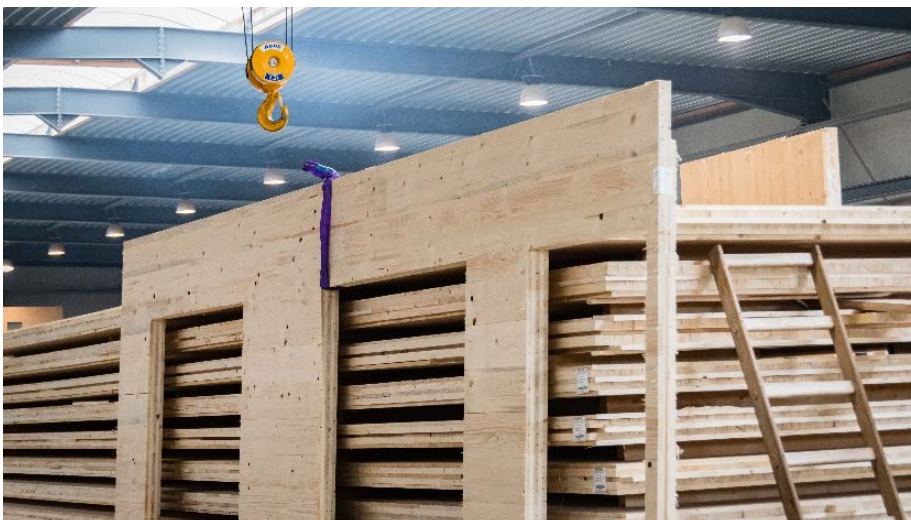
More specifically, the Construction Working Group is involved in crucial dossiers discussed at the EU level, including the implementation of the recast Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and of the revised Construction Products Regulation, the forthcoming European Affordable Housing Plan and its Strategy for Housing Construction, as well as circular construction topics such as EU End-of-Waste Criteria of Construction and Demolition Waste or Extended Producer Responsibility for manufacturers of construction products.

CEI-Bois and its Construction Working Group are also actively represented by the Secretariat in European Commission-led construction policy platforms, such as the CPR Acquis Subgroup on Structural Timber, the High-Level Construction Forum, and is working closely with other influential European stakeholders such as Construction Products Europe.

Task Forces operating under the Construction Working Group

2.2.1.1 European CLT Hub

The European CLT Hub was initiated at a meeting on 1 April 2019 in Vienna and unanimously supported in order to streamline the information and cooperate as well as interact at the European level.



In 2020, the hub was started by a group of company experts to define the common approach and the issues that should/could be tackled.

In July 2021, it was decided and requested to open up the hub to further interested companies and associations in order to broaden it. Interested companies and associations are requested to contact CEI-Bois.

2.2.1.2 Task Force on Volatile Organic Compounds

Since July 2022, the Task Force on Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) has been active within the CEI-Bois Construction Working Group. The VOC Task Force seeks to discuss issues related to emissions to indoor air and to coordinate on potential advocacy activities. The task force is open to all CEI-Bois members, who are invited to contact the secretariat if interested in taking part in the upcoming meetings.

2.2.1.3 TIMBIM

The TIMBIM project aims at helping manufacturers to digitise their data and make them available in a machine-readable and standardised format. TIMBIM creates a common data dictionary and common data templates that are based on relevant harmonised product and test standards and applied across all European countries.

"Product information is essential for smooth processes throughout all planning stages. Products are the variables in the gigantic interrelated systems that we call buildings. Products make up the different components, which in turn comprise the building. If as an industry, we want to transform digitally, we need to start with the smallest elements of the system. We need to digitise product information in a way that allows algorithms to recognise and access those variables. We should also be able to provide and exchange this information across the entire industry. This is a prerequisite for the adoption of new digital technologies, processes and business models within the sector."

Dr Hansueli Schmid, Chair of the TIMBIM Task Force.

2.2.1.4 Task Force on Affordable Housing

CEI-Bois establishes a new Task Force on EU Affordable Housing

In June 2025, the CEI-Bois Construction Working Group established a dedicated Task Force on EU Affordable Housing under the Chairmanship of Mr Kalle Ikonen. Its main goal is to engage with the EU Affordable Housing Plan, ensuring that the wood sector's interests and wood-based construction are well represented in upcoming policies and funding opportunities.

The Task Force will coordinate closely with the Chair and members of the Construction Working Group to align its work with broader strategic priorities. The group held its first meeting on 5 September.

2.2.2 Sustainability Working Group

The main aim of the Sustainability Working Group is to promote the inherent advantages of using wood. Wood is renewable, sustainable, and can be used, re-used and re-cycled. It is a model product for Europe's transition towards a green, circular biobased economy intended to boost global competitiveness, foster sustainable economic growth, and generate new jobs.

The woodworking industries are committed to sourcing wood from sustainably managed forests and to complying with the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) and the EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation (EUDR). They are also helping tackle climate change by storing carbon in harvested wood products and substituting other fossil-intensive materials. Not only are the production and processing of wood highly energy-efficient - giving wood products an ultra-low carbon footprint, but wood can often be used to substitute for materials which require large amounts of energy to be produced, and which suffer from higher carbon intensity. Wood is therefore a crucial material and product of the circular Bioeconomy.

The Sustainability Working Group is specifically involved in crucial dossiers discussed at the EU level, among which the implementation of the EUDR, of the Carbon Removals Certification Framework, of the LULUCF Regulation, as well as the forthcoming Bioeconomy Strategy and Circular Economy Act.

CEI-Bois and its Sustainability Working Group are also actively represented by the secretariat in European Commission-led expert groups, such as the Multi-stakeholder platform on protecting and restoring the world's forests with a focus on deforestation and forest degradation, the Expert Group on forest and forestry stakeholder platform, the Expert Group on forest-based industries and sectorally related issues, and the Expert Group on carbon removals, and is working closely with other influential European stakeholders in the wider forest-based sector and beyond.

In September, CEI-Bois also applied for membership in the soon-to-be-established Expert Group on Nature Credits, to be led by the European Commission, and aimed at operationalising its Roadmap towards Nature Credits, a topic of strong interest for the timber sector.

Task Forces operating under the Sustainability Working Group

2.2.2.1 LCA Task Force

For the monitoring of the LCA and standardisation-related issues, a dedicated LCA Task Force is in place within the Sustainability Working Group. The LCA Task Force provides the proper orientations to ensure the woodworking industries are duly represented within the competent standardisation committees.

2.2.2.2 Task Force on the EUDR

In October 2023, CEI-Bois established, together with the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS), a Joint EUDR Task Force as part of the wider Sustainability

Working Group. Meeting on ad-hoc basis, the CEI-Bois and EOS Joint EUDR Task Force enables the sharing of relevant updates and encourages open discussions in view of supporting and facilitating the implementation of the EUDR. The joint task force is open to all the CEI-Bois members, who are invited to contact the secretariat if interested in taking part in the upcoming meetings.

2.2.2.3 Carbon Removals Certification Task Force

Since the beginning of 2023, CEI-Bois has been an active member of the European Commission-led Expert Group on carbon removals. To enable members to support CEI-Bois' mandate in this expert group, a Joint Carbon Removals Certification Task Force was set up in January 2023 together with EOS as part of the wider Sustainability Working Group. This joint task force is also meeting on an ad-hoc basis, as demanded by developments pertaining to the workings of Expert Group on carbon removals. The joint task force is open to all CEI-Bois members, who are invited to contact the secretariat if interested in taking part in the upcoming meetings.

2.2.3 Social Affairs Working Group

Within all companies, maintaining and improving the quality of the relations between employers and workers is a sine qua non condition to guarantee the company growth. Both actors target the common objective of a sound company development.

More largely but similarly, at European level, the Social Dialogue represents the way to improve the European governance through the involvement of the social partners in decision-making and in the implementation process.

The EU Wood Sector Social Dialogue brings together the wood industry workers and employers from the EU member States, respectively represented by the European Federation of Building & Woodworkers (EFBWW) and CEI-Bois.

Recently, the sector trade unions (EFBWW), the European Furniture Industries Confederation (EFIC) and CEI-Bois decided to organise common meetings under a Joint Sector Social Dialogue framework for debating common issues and addressing the EU Institutions common messages.

These meetings are preceded by CEI-Bois Social Affairs WG, which aims to:

- Monitor relevant industrial relations-related issues
- Identify common areas of cooperation with the trade unions
- Promote and manage investigation and communication projects
- Contribute to the definition of the European Sector Social Dialogue Agenda

In 2025, the Social Affairs Working Group met on 3 occasions and discussed a.o. the following topics: national collective bargaining updates, telework and the right to disconnect, AI at work, Gender Equality Strategy, Traineeships, Public Procurement, Quality Jobs, etc.

2.2.4 Trade Working Group

The Trade Working Group of CEI-Bois mainly deals with two sets of activities:

- Markets discussions aiming at taking stock of the situation and comparing trends across Europe and beyond
- Trade relations with countries outside Europe, including challenges and opportunities

The main issues dealt with by the Trade Working Group in 2024/2025 are described in the “Overview of CEI-Bois’ main advocacy actions” below (except for the EU Deforestation Regulation, which is dealt with in a dedicated section).

2.2.5 Research, Development and Innovation Working Group

The Research, Development, and Innovation Working Group contributes to strengthening the wood industry’s position in public funding programmes for innovation research at European, transnational, and national/regional level.

It aims at defining the strategic research questions for the wood industry as an integral part of the forest-based, circular bioeconomy and collecting proposals to make them tangible.

Connection with all the relevant partner organisations and with the Forest-based Technology Platform (FTP) is essential.

The CEI-Bois members and network are engaged and integrated into the activities of the RDI Working Group, which is communicating clearly about research for innovation and interacting with the competent EU interlocutors.

2.2.6 Role and election rules of CEI-Bois Working Group Chairs

During its meeting of 5 September 2024, the CEI-Bois General Assembly adopted the “*Chairperson of a CEI-Bois Working Group. Role and election rules*” document, which covers the functioning of CEI-Bois working groups, as well as of the CEI-Bois task forces that can be created in the framework of a dedicated working group.

The document was prepared on express request of the CEI-Bois Board and aims at providing clarity about the selection process of the Chairperson of a CEI-Bois Working Group. In a nutshell, the key elements of the document are:

- The Chair of a working group is appointed by the CEI-Bois Board, on consensus. The General Assembly is simply informed about this decision. The working group itself will consider specific perspectives required for the working group and their work, which will be forwarded to the CEI-Bois Board Members.
- Each member of CEI-Bois has the right to propose a candidate as Chair of a working group.
- Each working group shall have a Chair proposed by different CEI-Bois national or European member. Companies’ expert can be nominated by its affiliated CEI-Bois national/ European member. Companies without a national affiliation shall be proposed by any CEI-Bois national/ European member.

- The Chair is elected for a mandate of 3 years and can be re-elected, although a rotation approach should always be the preferred option.

The first election of the Chairs according to the “Chairperson of a CEI-Bois Working Groups. Role and elections rules” took place during the June 2025 CEI-Bois Board meeting.

On 11 June, the CEI-Bois General Assembly endorsed the Working Group Chairs for the 2025–2028 mandate:

- **Sustainability Working Group:** Mr Richards (Director, Policy and Regulations - Stora Enso, Wood Products Division)
- **Construction Working Group:** Mr Lechner (Deputy Managing Director and Head of the Construction Department - Association of the Austrian Wood Industries)
- **R&D Working Group:** Mr Elvnert (Secretary General - Forest-based Sector Technology Platform)
- **Social Affairs Working Group:** Ms Steinwall (Responsible for international employer affairs and negotiator - Swedish Association of Industrial Employers)
- **Trade Working Group:** Mr King (Strategic Advisor - SCA Products, UK)

2.2.7 Other working groups and platforms

Currently, CEI-Bois is a member of the following official working groups/platforms run by the EU Commission:

- Expert group on carbon removals
- Expert group/Multi-stakeholder platform on deforestation and forest degradation
- Expert group/Multi-stakeholder platform on protecting and restoring the world's forests, including the EU timber regulation and the FLEGT regulation
- Expert Group on forest-based industries and sectorally related issues
- Sectoral social dialogue committee
- Expert group on forest and forestry stakeholder platform

On a broader level, CEI-Bois is also a member of:

- UNECE FAO
- ACFI (FAO) steering committee,
- Forest Europe
- WoodPoP

2.3 2025 Summer General Assembly

CEI-Bois held its General Assembly on 10 and 11 June in Helsinki on invitation of its member Finnish Forest Industries Federation (FFIF). On this occasion, CEI-Bois reaffirmed its role as the united voice of the European woodworking industries at a time when EU policymakers are accelerating their focus on industrial competitiveness and preparing the post-2030 climate and circular economy agenda.

From the revision of the Bioeconomy Strategy to the upcoming Affordable Housing Plan, the sector is at the heart of crucial legislative processes. CEI-Bois continues to provide evidence-based input and constructive proposals, supporting the recognition of wood as a strategic material for the green transition. Over the past months, our Confederation has intensified its engagement with EU institutions, industry alliances, and Member States, advocating for coherent frameworks.

In this context, governance and continuity remain key. The Chair, Mr Sampsa Auvinen, underlined this commitment by reporting to the General Assembly that the Board had formally endorsed the appointment of the Working Group Chairs for the 2025–2028 mandate. This structured and forward-looking decision ensures that each thematic area benefits from experienced leadership and strategic direction over the next three years. These appointments reflect CEI-Bois' determination to reinforce continuity, empower sectoral expertise, and strengthen its collective voice in shaping the future of the European woodworking and timber industries.

The General Assembly also elected Mr Henrik Söderström, Senior Vice President Sales and Marketing at Metsä Wood, as a new Board Member. His deep knowledge of the sector and strong market orientation contributes to the strategic guidance of CEI-Bois in the years to come.

The event also provided a unique opportunity for participants to experience first-hand the strength, innovation, and sustainability of Finnish forestry and the wood-based sector. It showcased how our industry is actively contributing to the EU's climate objectives and putting into practice the core principles of the New Euro-



pean Bauhaus: sustainability, aesthetics, and inclusion. From sustainable forest management to cutting-edge wood construction, field visits illustrated the essential role of well-managed forests in supporting carbon and water cycles, preserving biodiversity, and fostering the wellbeing of local communities. Participants also had the chance to witness pioneering examples of timber architecture, including multi-storey wooden residential buildings developed as affordable and inclusive housing solutions.

This year's event was further enriched by a keynote address from Mr Daniel Sazonov, Mayor of Helsinki. His remarks highlighted the critical role of innovation, policy alignment, and strong public-private partnerships in advancing the contribution of wood to Europe's sustainable and climate-resilient future.

2.4 Communications

2.4.1 Circular letters

CEI-Bois is continuously keeping its members informed about recent policy developments, consultations and initiatives, reports and studies, positions, events and other matters. It also seeks members' views and technical opinions on specific issues.

This internal communication is carried out by means of circular letters sent to the members concerned. Over the course of one year, the CEI-Bois Secretariat generally addresses between 150 and 200 circular letters to its members.

2.4.2 Advocacy focus

In addition, every two months, CEI-Bois publishes a newsletter which aims at providing an update on some selective EU ongoing topics that are of primary interests for the woodworking industries.

In order to have a comprehensive overview of the different issues, members are invited to read the correlated circular letters containing detailed information.

2.4.3 Website

The main visitor statistics between 16 October 2024 and 15 October 2025 are:

- Number of sessions: 5,181
- Unique visitors: 3,306
- Pages viewed: 9,859
- Pages viewed/session: 1.9
- Average length of visit: 3'11"



2.4.4 Social media

CEI-Bois is mainly active on LinkedIn, where it publishes posts aimed at increasing the awareness about its organisation, its members, the woodworking sector and all the benefits of using wood in the context of decarbonisation and climate neutrality by 2050.

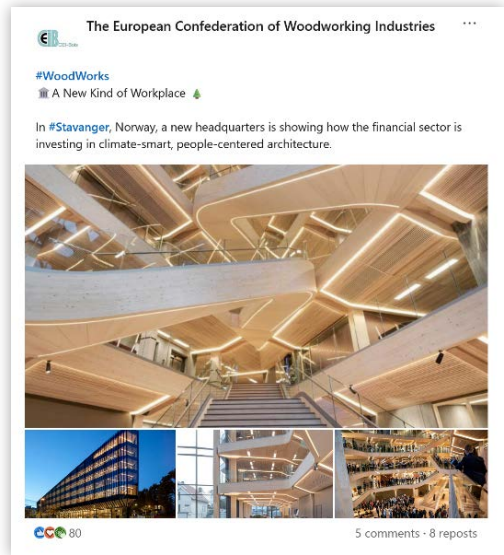
CEI-Bois' LinkedIn page also serves to share and give greater visibility to our members' actions and events. Members are therefore encouraged to inform the secretariat of any events, activities or news items that they would like to publish or share.

The key indicators between 16 October 2024 and 15 October 2025 are:

- Followers: 2,370
- Posts: 233
- Impressions: 149,869
- Clicks: 9,484
- Reactions: 4479

2.4.5 #WoodWorks

As communication through social media, particularly LinkedIn, becomes increasingly important for policy makers, CEI-Bois has launched a weekly initiative to raise awareness about wood. In April 2025, CEI-Bois started to share weekly posts under the hashtag #WoodWorks. #WoodWorks is a storytelling initiative that highlights real-life wood construction projects from across Europe and beyond. Through a series of engaging LinkedIn posts, CEI-Bois aims to demonstrate how wood is already helping Europe move towards climate neutrality by 2050, while also contributing to beautiful, resilient, and people-centered environments, fully in line with the vision and principles of the New European Bauhaus.



Featured projects include:

- Architectural and construction projects (public or private) where wood plays a central role
- Projects that are innovative, sustainable, functional, or symbolically significant
- Examples that illustrate wood's potential in different typologies: housing, education, offices, sports, industry, cultural spaces, infrastructure, renovation, build-on-tops, etc.
- Both large-scale and smaller local projects that have a strong message or model potential

Each post aims to show how wood contributes to climate neutrality (CO₂ savings, carbon storage, or circularity), health and wellbeing (biophilic design, indoor comfort, low-emission construction), sustainability (renewable and recyclable materials, lifecycle benefits), technical excellence (prefabrication, precision, craftsmanship, innovation) and versatility (diversity of timber construction products and techniques, adaptability, disassembly, mixed-use potential, urban integration).

These posts intend to inspire and inform, showing what a climate-smart, bio-based Europe could look like, through the lens of wood in practice.

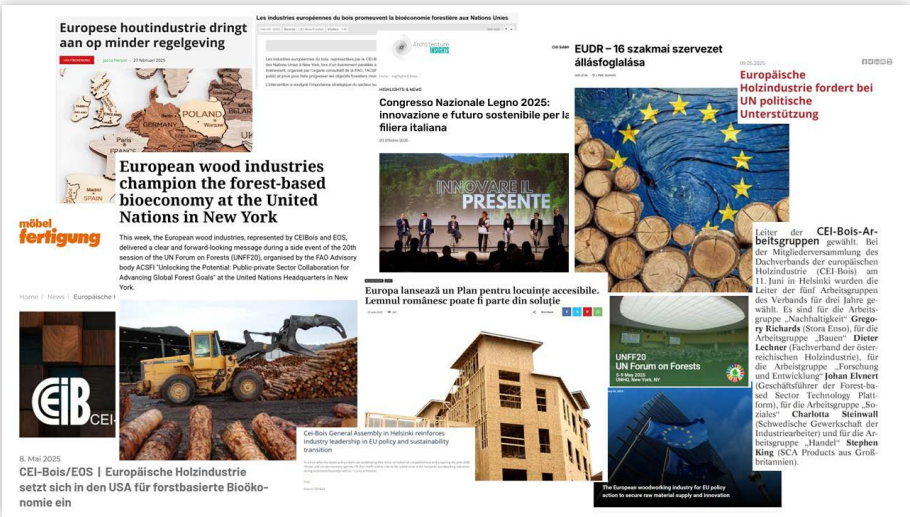
2.4.6 Press releases, position papers, statements and publications

Over the past year, CEI-Bois has also regularly communicated through press releases, (joint) position papers and statements as well as publications. These included:

- **Joint statement** (11 December 2024): European primary producers and various industries welcome that the EU institutions agreed on securing a one-year postponement for the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).
- **Press release** (29 January 2025): The European woodworking industry applauds the EU Commission's competitiveness compass and calls for enhanced support for the wood sector.
- **Press release** (8 May 2025): European wood industries champion the forest-based bioeconomy at the United Nations in New York.
- **Press release** (12 June 2025): CEI-Bois General Assembly in Helsinki reinforces industry leadership in EU policy and sustainability transition.
- **Press release** (16 June 2025): The European Wood Policy Platform calls for actions to build a resilient and skilled workforce.
- **Contribution** (30 June 2025): Quality jobs are provided by competitive companies that make it possible for individuals to thrive.
- **Joint statement** (2 July 2025): The forest and the forest-based sectors urge the EU to enable active, adaptive forest management and a thriving forest-based bioeconomy.
- **Joint statement** (8 July): We stress the urgent need for a more targeted, risk-based, and practicable implementation of the EUDR, going beyond what is provided by the current Regulation.
- **Contribution** (17 September 2025): CEI-Bois applauds the EC's intention to develop a European Strategy for Housing Construction and proposes three key recommendations.
- **Press release** (15 October 2025): European Wood Policy Platform's 4th High Level Meeting champions wood as a driver of Europe's green transformation.
- **Press release** (15 October 2025): Wood sector driving Europe's affordable housing future
- **Press release** (16 October 2025): WoodPoP launches the Dara Award.
- **Joint contribution** (17 October 2025): Wood4Bauhaus contribution to Call for Evidence on the New European Bauhaus.

2.4.7 Publications in the press

All the above-mentioned communication activities resulted in numerous articles being shared and published in daily newspapers, specialist magazines, websites and social media. For the year 2025, we counted some 60 publications and references in the press. These publications provided additional visibility for our activities and those of our members.





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3

3 The European woodworking industries

3.1 Timber Supply

The tables below are about the timber supply in Europe, respectively for softwood and hardwood. Data availability has worsened compared to last year as large countries such as France, Italy and Romania could not share data. Overall, the dataset is still quite representative even though the total, with some countries missing, is underestimated. 2024 and 2025 are estimates. Data are in 000 m³.



Wood in the rough has the following main uses: wood used by the industry to be processed into other products (logs for production of sawnwood, pulpwood for production of wood pulp for paper production) and wood fuel used for energy purposes. The tables below show the breakdown of the uses in each European country that has shared data.

In softwood, logs predominate, with 155 million m³ removed from European forests in 2023. The amount of pulpwood removed was 95 million m³ while the amount of wood fuel was 34 million m³. So, in softwood, about 53% of wood in the rough removed were logs, about 32% was pulpwood, and 12% fuelwood. For 2024, estimates point to removals basically at the same level of 2023, while preliminary projections for 2025 point to an increase in removals.

In hardwood, the situation is different with logs accounting for 22 million m³ removed from the European forests in 2023. Pulpwood quantity was 45 million m³ and wood fuel 82 million m³. So, in hardwood, about 15% of wood in the rough removed were logs for the sawmill industry, about 30% was pulpwood, and 54% fuelwood. No significant change is expected for 2024 and 2025.

Softwood removals of wood in the rough

Country	Industrial wood									Wood fuel ^b			Total		
	Total			Logs			Pulpwood ^a			2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025						
Austria	18,758	18,801	19,550	9,752	9,490	10,000	2,637	2,511	2,650	3,451	3,114	3,000	22,209	21,915	22,550
Bosnia-Herzegovia	1,878	1,871	1,865	1,291	1,265	1,240	463	487	511	1	1	1	1,879	1,872	1,866
Bulgaria	1,800	...	...	965	...	...	810	...	...	494	...	...	2,295	...	...
Estonia	3,987	3,876	3,876	3,091	3,000	3,000	871	850	850	1,473	1,400	1,400	5,460	5,276	5,276
Finland	45,468	45,989	48,131	23,525	23,968	24,553	21,943	22,021	23,578	4,900	4,900	4,900	50,368	50,889	53,031
Germany	45,702	45,510	45,110	36,149	36,200	35,800	9,444	9,200	9,200	8,723	9,500	9,200	54,426	55,010	54,310
Latvia	7,650	7,850	7,850	5,450	5,500	5,500	1,500	1,750	1,750	1,100	1,000	1,000	8,750	8,850	8,850
Luxembourg	177	145	177	40	115	127	37	8	14	18	12	14	195	158	191
Montenegro	714	351	355	562	281	295	142	70	60	50	70	62	764	421	417
Netherlands	428	422	422	162	160	160	234	230	230	402	400	385	830	822	807
Poland	29,839	29,700	29,500	14,993	14,950	14,900	14,244	14,200	14,100	3,575	3,600	3,650	33,414	33,300	33,150
Portugal	2,549	2,720	2,910	1,262	1,400	1,600	1,166	1,200	1,190	794	800	850	3,343	3,520	3,760
Serbia	271	263	274	162	160	165	78	75	79	128	118	124	399	381	398
Slovakia	3,476	4,140	3,918	2,647	3,000	2,900	811	1,125	1,000	241	275	250	3,718	4,415	4,168
Slovenia	2,022	2,306	2,036	1,674	1,800	1,700	332	490	320	258	250	240	2,280	2,556	2,276
Spain	9,043	9,043	9,043	5,416	5,416	5,416	3,147	3,147	3,147	756	756	756	9,798	9,798	9,798
Sweden	61,450	59,850	61,350	34,300	32,900	33,700	27,000	26,800	27,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	64,450	62,850	64,350
Switzerland	2,555	2,583	2,608	2,250	2,270	2,290	297	305	310	856	860	870	3,411	3,443	3,478
Türkiye	16,000	18,156	18,156	6,652	6,874	6,874	8,448	10,134	10,134	2,068	2,282	2,282	18,067	20,438	20,438
United Kingdom	7,122	7,478	7,851	4,883	5,127	5,383	1,846	1,938	2,035	1,669	1,753	1,841	8,791	9,231	9,692
Total Europe	260,889	261,054	264,982	155,226	153,876	155,602	95,452	96,541	98,658	33,958	34,091	33,825	294,848	295,145	298,807
Source: COFFI															
Remarks:	^a Pulpwood, round and split, as well as chips and particles produced directly there from and used as pulpwood														
	^b Including chips and particles produced from wood in the rough and used for energy purposes														
	Total is higher at times than sum of pulpwood and logs due to a residual category omitted here which includes pitprops, poles, piling, posts														
	In Austria's case the residual category is high, accounting for over 6 million m3. In Latvia's case the residual category accounts for about 700,000 m3														
	A few countries including Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Norway and Romania have not shared data thus total Europe is slightly underestimated														

Source: COFFI

Hardwood removals of wood in the rough

Country	Industrial wood															Wood fuel ^b			Total		
	Total			Logs			Pulpwood ^a			2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025						
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025												
Austria	1,420	1,573	1,620	285	278	290	672	695	750	2,220	2,076	2,000	3,640	3,649	3,620						
Bosnia-Herzegovia	639	597	558	562	528	496	63	54	46	1,208	1,111	1,022	1,847	1,708	1,580						
Bulgaria	895	...	...	325	...	...	560	...	...	1,672	...	...	2,567	...	...				
Estonia	2,429	2,125	2,125	1,148	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,258	1,100	1,100	2,558	2,500	2,500	4,987	4,625						
Finland	8,185	8,091	8,158	1,033	968	1,085	7,153	7,123	7,073	4,900	4,900	4,900	13,085	12,991	13,058						
Germany	4,092	3,290	3,520	2,818	2,070	2,200	1,256	1,200	1,300	13,489	12,900	12,600	17,581	16,190	16,120						
Latvia	5,850	5,400	5,400	2,050	1,800	1,800	3,200	3,000	3,000	2,838	2,800	2,800	8,688	8,200	8,200						
Luxembourg	52	47	49	11	18	21	40	30	28	32	30	29	84	78	78						
Netherlands	165	169	169	42	45	45	114	115	115	1,798	1,800	1,800	1,963	1,969	1,969						
Poland	5,969	5,950	5,850	2,531	2,550	2,500	3,381	3,350	3,300	3,402	3,500	3,600	9,371	9,450	9,450						
Portugal	8,651	8,770	8,920	350	300	340	8,133	8,300	8,400	1,680	2,000	2,500	10,330	10,770	11,420						
Serbia	1,231	1,219	1,233	887	885	890	246	240	245	5,979	5,700	5,900	7,210	6,919	7,133						
Slovakia	3,095	3,155	3,357	740	900	1,000	2,348	2,250	2,350	288	250	300	3,383	3,405	3,657						
Slovenia	911	1,012	979	487	530	530	370	432	400	1,191	1,170	1,150	2,102	2,182	2,129						
Spain	6,097	6,097	6,097	523	523	523	5,254	5,254	5,254	2,670	2,670	2,670	8,767	8,767	8,767						
Sweden	4,706	4,669	4,796	100	100	100	4,456	4,419	4,546	3,000	3,000	3,000	7,706	7,669	7,796						
Switzerland	403	418	428	218	225	230	182	190	195	1,291	1,295	1,300	1,694	1,713	1,728						
Türkiye	6,551	7,442	7,442	1,625	1,965	1,965	4,921	5,364	5,364	3,099	2,282	2,282	9,650	9,724	9,724						
United Kingdom	102	102	102	52	52	52	2	2	2	613	613	613	715	715	715						
Total Europe	69,587	68,593	68,759	22,052	21,910	22,036	45,185	44,305	44,322	81,728	81,984	83,365	151,314	150,576	152,124						
Source: COFFI																					
Remarks:	^a Pulpwood, round and split, as well as chips and particles produced directly there from and used as pulpwood																				
	^b Including chips and particles produced from wood in the rough and used for energy purposes																				
	Total is higher at times than sum of pulpwood and logs due to a residual category omitted here which includes pitprops, poles, piling, posts.																				
	In Austria's and Latvia's cases the residual category is quite high, accounting for over half a million m3																				
A few countries including Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Norway and Romania have not shared data thus total Europe is slightly underestimated																					

Source: COFFI

3.2 Overview of timber balance across the world

The table below is about the production of industrial roundwood – logs, pulp and a minor residual category – at global level. We present the top 20 largest producers, importers and exporters of industrial roundwood ranked by removals.

Removals		Exports		Imports	
United States of America	346,265,332	New Zealand	21,207,855	China	38,490,315
Brazil	184,424,000	Germany	8,596,483	Austria	8,684,948
Russian Federation	178,282,000	United States of America	6,412,017	Sweden	7,302,676
China	171,443,877	Czechia	5,093,000	Germany	4,496,732
Canada	129,457,561	Norway	3,975,284	India	4,219,000
Indonesia	74,419,003	France	3,667,366	Belgium	3,847,700
Sweden	66,200,000	Spain	3,523,608	Portugal	3,422,382
Finland	53,581,748	Canada	3,449,247	Canada	3,049,502
India	49,868,000	Latvia	3,282,215	Finland	2,519,130
Germany	49,793,113	Poland	3,167,622	Republic of Korea	2,231,146
Viet Nam	45,335,420	Papua New Guinea	2,492,229	Romania	2,129,546
Chile	39,948,000	Estonia	1,972,548	Japan	2,015,701
Poland	35,808,162	Slovakia	1,750,686	Poland	1,736,399
New Zealand	32,496,000	Belgium	1,735,377	Italy	1,727,956
France	25,270,000	Russian Federation	1,670,964	Czechia	1,559,000
Australia	24,960,000	Solomon Islands	1,624,615	Viet Nam	1,539,365
Japan	22,619,000	Japan	1,595,407	Slovakia	1,261,430
Türkiye	22,550,384	Brazil	1,526,345	Latvia	1,114,118
Uruguay	17,529,000	Lithuania	1,505,807	France	1,063,442
Spain	16,276,079	Finland	1,505,624	Senegal	983,095

Source: UNECE/FAO 2025 and EOS re-elaboration

3.3 Development of Sawn Softwood Production and Consumption

Sawn softwood accounts for over 90% of sawnwood produced in Europe. The tables below, which were presented at the International Softwood Conference 2025, show the current situation in terms of production and consumption.

Development of Softwood production (1.000 m³) by country

Country	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
AT	9.250	9.650	10.200	10.343	10.339	10.582	10.100	9.125	9.700	9.900	10.000
BE	1.400	1.350	1.450	1.450	1.460	1.500	1.450	1.350	1.250	1.300	1.300
CH	1.074	1.037	1.078	1.077	1.114	1.196	1.195	1.150	1.204	1.210	1.210
DE	21.109	22.050	22.780	23.505	25.216	25.313	24.309	22.944	22.367	21.250	21.250
DK	310	360	324	331	360	400	375	233	247	250	250
ES	1.821	2.375	2.496	2.536	2.391	2.873	1.818	2.523	2.336	2.416	2.454
FI	11.400	11.700	11.800	11.354	10.900	11.900	11.200	10.400	10.900	11.700	11.700
FR	6.400	6.596	6.795	6.559	6.400	7.000	7.000	6.700	6.300	6.200	6.200
IT	950	970	950	900	900	950	950	855	855	855	855
LV	2.792	2.662	2.730	2.660	2.600	2.700	2.847	2.569	2.963	2.788	2.935
NL	126	110	82	80	76	110	115	103	104	106	110
NO	2.533	2.655	2.675	2.650	2.680	2.811	2.705	2.490	2.680	2.750	2.700
PL	4.356	4.419	4.500	4.443	4.200	4.250	4.144	4.150	3.805	3.900	4.000
RO	4.340	3.600	3.550	3.500	3.000	3.500	2.400	2.900	2.800	2.700	2.600
SE	18.010	18.309	18.300	18.600	18.400	19.050	18.800	17.800	17.800	17.800	17.800
UK	3.624	3.719	3.719	3.617	3.408	3.574	3.221	2.908	3.161	3.200	3.200
EUROPE (ISC)	89.495	91.562	93.429	93.604	93.444	97.709	92.630	88.200	88.472	88.325	88.564
USA	55.300	57.414	59.332	59.767	62.733	63.401	64.308	63.411	62.306	60.955	66.548
CAN	48.158	47.304	46.370	41.527	39.190	40.227	36.411	31.593	31.900	30.600	30.600
North America	103.458	104.718	105.701	101.294	101.923	103.627	100.719	95.004	94.206	91.555	97.148
TOTAL	192.952	196.281	199.131	194.898	195.366	201.337	193.349	183.204	182.678	179.880	185.712

* Blue cells show that forecasts for 2026 were not available so values have been calculated by repeating the 2025 data

** Gold cells values have been calculated using FAOSTAT data

Development of Softwood consumption (1.000 m³) by country

Country	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
AT	5.756	5.950	6.170	6.064	6.175	6.530	6.137	5.108	5.357	5.100	5.200
BE	2.450	2.600	2.750	2.750	2.760	3.300	2.790	1.640	1.660	1.700	1.700
CH	1.187	1.181	1.213	1.183	1.220	1.281	1.299	1.238	1.263	1.260	1.260
DE	18.729	19.285	19.597	19.416	20.629	20.104	17.294	16.059	16.431	16.900	17.250
DK	1.538	1.520	1.298	1.261	1.520	1.583	1.278	1.113	1.353	1.489	1.489
ES	2.597	3.131	3.270	3.316	3.036	3.537	2.855	3.314	3.307	3.474	3.542
FI	3.200	2.900	3.000	2.506	2.700	3.000	2.300	1.900	2.000	2.200	2.300
FR	7.730	7.917	8.345	8.454	8.118	9.245	9.040	8.200	7.471	7.300	7.500
IT	4.801	4.972	4.718	4.010	3.714	4.230	5.454	4.614	4.598	4.998	4.988
LV	832	850	936	839	782	1.039	780	600	600	650	650
NL	2.210	2.297	2.397	2.238	2.447	2.731	2.259	2.144	2.471	2.507	2.490
NO	2.924	2.986	2.932	2.920	2.864	3.192	2.679	2.328	2.413	2.420	2.300
PL	4.289	4.489	4.580	4.703	4.350	4.350	4.166	4.225	3.802	3.910	4.030
RO	2.642	2.450	2.600	2.800	2.100	2.000	1.200	1.900	1.700	1.700	1.700
SE	5.500	5.780	5.705	5.500	5.300	5.800	4.900	4.410	3.670	4.200	4.500
UK	9.677	10.279	9.994	9.609	9.703	10.994	8.736	8.462	8.774	8.831	8.831
EUROPE (ISC)	76.062	78.587	79.705	77.569	77.418	82.916	73.167	67.255	66.870	68.627	69.728
USA	79.586	80.389	82.117	82.214	86.612	88.142	90.282	87.577	85.641	83.508	86.413
CAN	14.719	15.353	16.074	13.193	12.615	13.991	12.548	10.580	11.500	11.900	11.900
North America	94.305	95.742	98.191	95.407	99.226	102.133	102.830	98.158	97.141	95.408	98.313
TOTAL	170.367	174.328	177.896	172.976	176.645	185.049	175.997	165.413	164.011	164.035	168.041

* Blue cells show that forecasts for 2026 were not available so values have been calculated by repeating the 2025 data

** Gold cells values have been calculated using FAOSTAT data

After peaking in 2021, softwood production has significantly declined in 2022 and in 2023. Since 2023, production is stable on lower aggregated levels as compared to the late 2010s.

Production in the sector has been curtailed to accommodate weak demand. Sawn softwood prices have sharply declined from the peaks observed during 2021 and 2022. This is mainly due to the downfall of the construction sector. However, there might be light at the end of the tunnel. If the market does have already bottomed out, the recovery is expected to be sluggish at least in the short-term.

Costs have remarkably increased over the last few years, in particular logs prices, which make up more than half of the total costs for sawmills. This, combined with sawnwood prices which have not risen that much over the last couple of years, has squeezed the margins of many sawmills across Europe.

3.4 Wood-based industries sector figures

The EU's wood-based industries cover a range of downstream activities, including wood-working industries, large parts of the furniture industry, pulp and paper manufacturing and converting industries and the printing industry. Together, some 410,000 enterprises were active in wood-based industries across the EU in 2022. They represented one in five (19%) manufacturing enterprises across the EU, highlighting that – with the exception of pulp and paper manufacturing that is characterised by economies of scale – many



wood-based industries had a relatively high number of small or medium-sized enterprises. The wood industries only accounted for over 7% of manufacturing enterprises across the EU.

The economic importance of an industry can be measured by the share of its value added in the economy. In 2022, the value of wood-based industries (without the furniture industry) in the EU was €139 billion or 5.7% of the total manufacturing industry. Woodworking industries *stricto sensu* accounted for over 2% of the value added.

Wood-based industries employed around 3.05 million people across the EU in 2022 or 10.2% of the manufacturing total. There were more than 900,000 people employed within both the manufacture of wood and wood products and the manufacture of furniture. The woodworking industries *stricto sensu* accounted for over 3% of people employed in the manufacturing sector in the EU.

Main economic indicators for wood-based industries, EU, 2022

Sector/Indicator	Enterprises	Persons employed	Value added - million €	Net turnover - million €
Manufacturing total Europe	2,152,042	30,007,527	2,419,775	9,785,619
Manufacture of wood and of products of wood and cork	161,583	950,000	55,000	200,000
Manufacture of paper and paper products	18,523	630,000	60,200	256,000
Printing and service activities related to printing	100,000	520,661	23,825	67,209
Manufacture of furniture	130,000	950,000	:	120,000

Source: Eurostat



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4 Overview of CEI-Bois' main advocacy actions

4.1 Wood promotion

4.1.1 EC's competitiveness compass

On 29 January 2025, CEI-Bois welcomed the European Commission's commitment to fostering economic growth and competitiveness as outlined in the Competitiveness Compass. This initiative signals a critical step forward in strengthening the EU's global economic leadership, ensuring sustainable practices, and unlocking the potential of the growing green economy.



In a dedicated press release, CEI-Bois issued a series of calls for action:

1. Simplify regulations: reduce complexities to foster growth and innovation and tackle the existing single market barriers.
2. Prioritise the use of wood in the bioeconomy: advocate for sustainable wood use in construction, packaging, and everyday products.
3. Develop the workforce: support lifelong learning and establish career pathways for a skilled, adaptable workforce.
4. Ensure raw material supply: strengthen sustainable wood sourcing and enhance material recovery, reuse, and recycling through improved standards, urban waste sorting, and partnerships.

The European Wood Sector: At the heart of Europe's Bioeconomy

The woodworking industry urged the European Commission to place the wood sector at the core of the EU's bioeconomy strategy. As a renewable and climate-friendly resource, wood plays a pivotal role in transitioning to a sustainable, circular economy. The sector's contributions to reducing carbon emissions, fostering rural development, and supporting green jobs make it essential in achieving the EU's environmental and economic objectives.

The sustainable bioeconomy is the renewable segment of the circular economy. As a renewable, reusable, and recyclable material, wood can help facilitate such a circular economy. Given that wood is a renewable resource it has an important role to play in replacing and substituting for non-renewable materials. According to EUROSTAT, in 2022, *“the EU had an estimated 160 million hectares of forests - this means that forests cover 39% of the EU’s land area. This represents an increase of about 8.3 million hectares or 5.5% since 2000 and 2.6 million hectares or 1.7% since 2010. In total, an estimated 66% of the net sustainable annual increment of wood in EU forests was harvested in 2022 i.e a further third could have been removed and the felling rate would still have remained with the sustainability boundary.”*

Also, recovered wood has the potential for reuse for the same purpose, repurposed with minimum modification into new products, or fully recycled. All three options extend recovered wood’s lifecycle, minimise waste, and also prolong the time the carbon is stored. Moreover, as an essential solution to the current housing crisis - increasing the use of industrial off-site wood construction to produce modular homes in factories - can also contribute significantly to waste reduction in the construction industry.

A call for collaborative action

The European woodworking industry emphasised the importance of a united effort between policymakers, businesses, and stakeholders to:

- Reduce regulatory complexities that hinder growth and innovation in Europe
- Facilitate lifelong learning and workforce development while establishing sector-specific career pathway frameworks
- Tackle single-market barriers to ensure EU law is applied consistently across the EU
- Champion the sustainable use of wood in construction, packaging, furniture, and everyday products while ensuring wood is at the heart of the bioeconomy
- Facilitate a reliable supply of raw material while boosting the availability of secondary materials
- Identify and implement cohesively actions that can ensure a sustainable, reliable, and resilient wood supply for Europe’s timber industries in order to support a transition to a sustainable and circular bioeconomy
- Implement systems to divert wood from waste streams through the improved sorting and collection of urban and reclaimed wood from cities and communities
- Encourage partnerships and cooperation throughout the value chain to improve efficiency and effectiveness in raw material sourcing and recovery
- Require buildings to be designed for disassembly while our sector will facilitate the re-use of wood structural elements and the continued long-term storage of the carbon within them
- Establish new standards (and updating existing standards) that are necessary for a more efficient wood processing, use, reuse and recycling and setting up end-of-waste (EoW) criteria for wood streams in order to promote wood circularity, facilitate the development of secondary raw materials markets for recovered wooden construction products and help expand wood availability

4.1.2 European Wood Policy Platform - WoodPoP

The WoodPoP (European Wood Policy Platform) has been initiated by Finland and Austria, as part of the Austrian Wood initiative of the Austrian forest fund. This platform brings together 27 Pan-European countries (ministries and public administrations) who - together with industry, research and stakeholder organisations - aim to develop wood-related policy solutions that strengthen the wood-based circular bioeconomy across Europe and beyond. This platform allows CEI-Bois to cooperate with national governments representatives and enhance the visibility of the woodworking sector in strategic policy discussions on the sustainable use of wood. CEI-Bois is presently active in the technical working groups and meetings described below.

4.1.2.1 High-Level meeting

The High Level Meeting (HLM) is the main decision-making body. It is attended by delegations from Pan-European ministries led by high-level government officials (for instance Ministers, Secretaries of State, Director Generals, Directors) as well as regional and stakeholder organisations and observers.

WoodPoP's fourth High Level Meeting took place at InnoRenew CoE in Izola, Slovenia, uniting senior government officials, regional organisations, and key stakeholders from across Europe. The event underscored wood's strategic importance as a renewable resource that delivers immediate, scalable solutions for climate change mitigation, economic resilience, and social cohesion. With 17.5 million jobs supported across the value chain, including 8 million in the wood-based sector, the industry is a cornerstone of rural development and inclusive growth.



Keynote speakers and panelists highlighted the versatility of wood products, their carbon storage capacity, and their potential to replace fossil-intensive materials. Timber buildings were showcased for their ability to serve as long-term carbon sinks, reduce energy demand, and enhance human health and wellbeing.

A key theme of the meeting was the urgent need for investment in education, training, and workforce development. Participants called for modern, interdisciplinary education

programmes, practical training, and the integration of woodworking skills into broader curricula. The development of microcredentials and the use of EU transparency tools were also encouraged to foster mobility and excellence across Europe.

The event's highlight was the presentation of the draft outcome statement, *"The role of wood in Europe's clean, just and competitive transformation"* reaffirming the sector's commitment to sustainable sourcing, circularity, innovation, and skills development. The event also included the launch of the WoodPoP Dara Award, which aims to celebrate achievements in sustainable timber construction.

4.1.2.2 Technical Working Group on Communication

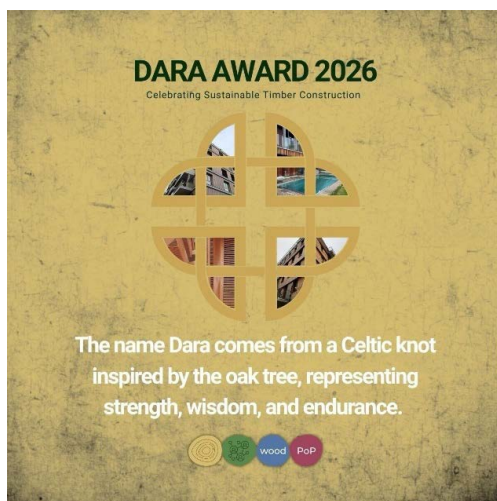
In 2024/2025, CEI-Bois took an active role in the WoodPoP Technical Working Group on Communication and Information, which continued to advance wood promotion, advocacy, and public awareness efforts across Europe. The group focused on strengthening communication strategies and tools that support the broader goals of the WoodPoP initiative and raise the visibility of wood as a sustainable building material.

Key activities during the year included the selection process for the new name of the Wood Building Prize, setting up the steering groups for the preparation of the Prize, and the development of national wood data leaflets to improve the accessibility and comparability of wood-related information. The working group was also active in the development and refinement of communication tools and channels, the creation of consistent visual and editorial materials, and the coordination of outreach activities to highlight WoodPoP's technical progress and achievements.

4.1.2.3 Dara Award Steering Group

In 2026, the European Wood Policy Platform will launch a new award, called "Dara". Inspired by the Celtic Dara knot, symbol of the sacred oak and its strong, interconnected roots, the award is dedicated to celebrating outstanding achievements in timber architecture projects that demonstrate innovation, sustainability, aesthetics and inclusivity, aligning with the principles of the New European Bauhaus.

CEI-Bois is supporting WoodPoP in the preparation of this inaugural edition, a.o. in the social media content creation, submission form development, selection and evaluation criteria definition, etc.



The award categories are the following:

- **Residential buildings:** single-family homes, multi-storey residences, public housing
- **Non-residential buildings:** offices, schools, care facilities, hospitality venues, industrial and commercial/public spaces
- **Infrastructure projects:** bridges, viewing platforms, rest areas, transport hubs, and more
- **Renovations, extensions & build-on-top projects:** creative adaptations and expansions of existing structures

Eligible projects must be fully completed by the submission deadline, on 31 March 2026. The award winners will be officially announced at the 5th High-Level Meeting of the European Wood Policy Platform in November 2026 in Prague. They will also benefit from broad visibility through WoodPoP's digital channels, communication networks and a Hall of Fame, where all valid entries will be showcased.

4.1.2.4 Technical Working Group on Education and Vocational Training

In 2024/2025, the WoodPoP Technical Working Group on Education & Vocational Training concentrated its efforts on bridging the skills gap in Europe's wood-based sector and enhancing the profile of wood-related professions in the evolving sustainable construction and bioeconomy domains. The TWG's key achievement for the period is the development and publication of a policy brief titled *"The Wood-Based Sector Requires a Skilled Workforce to Propel Europe Towards a Sustainable Future."*

CEI-Bois took an active role in the development of this policy brief, which was published in June 2025 and serves as a strategic roadmap for aligning education, vocational training and workforce development with the emerging needs of the wood-based sector. The document articulates the sector's challenge: an ageing workforce and rapidly evolving requirements (e.g. digitalisation, circular economy, eco-design) that demand new and upgraded skills.

The policy brief outlines concrete recommendations across multiple dimensions, including:

- Modernising Vocational Education and Training (VET) by integrating traditional skills with digital, circular, and interdisciplinary learning modalities.
- Promoting pan-European recognition of qualifications, micro-credentials, and cross-border mobility to enable a more dynamic workforce.
- Strengthening partnerships between education providers, industry, and research institutions to facilitate upskilling, reskilling, and hands-on learning.
- Ensuring attractiveness of wood-based careers to younger generations, and enhancing educational infrastructure from primary to tertiary levels across Europe.

The policy brief also calls for both financial and non-financial support at national and EU levels to underpin this transformation.

By issuing this document, the TWG positions the workforce challenge as a strategic enabler of the green and circular transition in the wood-based sector. The document provides a consolidated, policy-oriented voice for WoodPoP in dialogues with decision-makers, educational institutions, and industry actors.



4.1.3 Wood4Bauhaus

The European Commission's New European Bauhaus calls for a creative, interdisciplinary, novel movement embedded in the society to imagine together a sustainable future and to engage on a transformative path towards affordable and beautiful living spaces in the urban and rural environment. A key step is the transformation of the building sector into a circular model that can also counteract the escalating climate crisis.

The European wood-based sector has launched the Wood Sector Alliance for the New European Bauhaus (Wood4Bauhaus) to establish an open platform that brings together its manifold stakeholders. This sectoral alliance was initiated by several umbrella organisations: the InnovaWood EU network for wood research, innovation and education, the European Wood-Based Panel Federation (EPF), the European Confederation of



Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) and the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS). It has also the support of the Horizon 2020 project consortia BASAJAUN and WoodCircus. The WOOD4BAUHAUS alliance was confirmed by the European Commission as an official partner of the New European Bauhaus on 30 March 2021.

Wood, an extremely versatile natural material being part of a multitude of products, is a circular material par excellence. Long-life products using wood can store carbon for decades or even centuries in buildings and living spaces. They can also be re-used, remanufactured and recycled to further prolong the storage time. The alliance aims to raise awareness for the transformative power of the circular economy, put a spotlight on the versatility of innovative wood products and building systems, and facilitate dedicated co-creation partnerships with the wood sector for the New European Bauhaus.

4.1.3.1 Press release

On 15 October 2025, the Wood4Bauhaus Alliance published a press release titled "Wood sector driving Europe's affordable housing future" following the 4th WoodPoP High Level Meeting.

In this press release, the Wood4Bauhaus Alliance reaffirmed the central role of the wood sector in driving Europe's transformation and applauded the European Commission's intention to develop a European Strategy for Housing Construction as part of the upcoming European Affordable Housing Plan, a vital step to alleviate the housing affordability crisis. The WoodPop High-Level Meeting made a strong call to recognise the wood sector's role and invest in skills and education for making Europe's workforce fit for a more competitive future economy based on green resources and circularity.

To create the right framework conditions for increasing the supply of both new and renovated housing across Europe, Wood4Bauhaus proposed the following three key recommendations to ensure that Europe can meet its affordability and sustainability imperatives:

1. Set in motion a wave of new and sustainable construction including natural, renewable and climate-friendly materials in Europe to generate transformative growth.
2. Accelerate the renovation wave and recognise the crucial role of new buildings in tackling the growing housing shortage.
3. Mainstream industrialised construction in conjunction with circular bio-based materials and skills development to enhance productivity and competitiveness of the construction ecosystem.

The Wood4Bauhaus Alliance also insisted that the European Commission should work to ensure that the Strategy for Housing Construction delivers not just more homes, but also sustainable construction, affordable homes and quality jobs for all workers. The European wood sector has unique strengths in biobased, circular, carbon-storing materials and efficient prefabrication systems for both new built and retrofitting. It thus offers multiple opportunities for upscaling and growth in domestic and international markets, which can be further unlocked by the Strategy. To do so the Strategy needs to be closely linked to other initiatives such as the Quality Jobs Roadmap, the Fair Mobility Package and the proposal for a Revision of the Public Procurement, among others.

4.1.3.2 Contribution to a Call for Evidence on the New European Bauhaus

The European Commission launched a call for evidence on how to strengthen the New European Bauhaus (NEB) to which Wood4Bauhaus has responded with an own letter pointing out eight important recommendations.



The Wood4Bauhaus Alliance sees the New European Bauhaus (NEB) as a powerful community to promote bio-based innovation, resource efficiency, and circular design, turning EU climate ambition into tangible change in how we build, renovate, and live. Wood-based materials are sustainable, carbon-storing, and circular materials, perfectly positioned to deliver on the NEB mission, providing both environmental, economic and social value, through affordable and healthy homes.

The future evolution of the NEB should therefore consolidate its governance structure and community, secure stable funding, and enhance coherent policy coordination with key initiatives such as the Circular Economy Act, the European Affordable Housing Plan and the Bioeconomy Strategy. By embedding the NEB as a driving bottom-up facilitator for co-creation and co-design across these instruments, the Commission can ensure its long-term success as the creative and operational heart of Europe's sustainable, competitive transformation.

Wood-based solutions and bio-based materials embody the NEB principles of sustainability, aesthetics, and inclusion by translating them into climate-positive, circular, and human-centred design solutions that are essential to guide and lead Europe's green transformation and make the NEB vision tangible: sustainable, affordable, and beautiful living spaces for everyone.

In this respect, the Wood4Bauhaus Alliance reaffirmed the central role of the wood sector in driving Europe's transformation: with 17.5 million jobs linked to regional value chains, the wood sector is vital for both rural and urban economies and boosts a strong innovation ecosystem that drives competitiveness and higher productivity in construction, leading the digital green transition in the building sector.

Timber buildings are also showcases of long-term carbon sinks that boost health and wellbeing and are thus key to providing better housing and simultaneously cutting carbon emissions. The European wood sector is a global leader in resilient growth of innovative SMEs from domestic forest resources. It can scale up significantly through coherent policy support to deliver on the transition goals for the built environment.

Wood4Bauhaus proposed eight key recommendations in the following topical areas for the future development of the NEB:

1. Harnessing bio-based materials
2. Industrialised & off-site construction
3. Circular economy & recycling
4. Public procurement & regulatory alignment
5. Skills & workforce development
6. Community & inclusiveness
7. Research, innovation & monitoring
8. Policy coherence with housing initiatives

In conclusion, Wood4Bauhaus is convinced that the NEB has the potential to transform how Europe builds, renovates, and lives bridging climate ambition with human creativity and comfort. By embracing bio-based and circular materials, supporting industrialised construction, and strengthening skills and local engagement, the NEB can demonstrate how Europe's Green Deal becomes tangible for people in everyday life.

Wood-based materials provide practical, scalable solutions to achieve this vision. Wood4Bauhaus therefore urged the European Commission to anchor circularity, resource efficiency, cascading use, carbon storage, and inclusiveness at the core of the NEB's next phase turning the movement into a long-term framework for sustainable prosperity and cultural renewal across Europe.

4.1.4 The Circular Choices Coalition

CEI-Bois is a member of the Circular Choices coalition which brings together, as partners and supporters, a total of 20 EU trade associations, representing the biggest coalition ever from the forest-based bioeconomy sector at EU level. Together, they offer recyclable products and solutions generated from a renewa-



ble bio-based feedstock sourced in Europe, where they are manufactured with European technology. The sector represented by the coalition directly employs more than four million Europeans and represents € 520 billion in annual turnover.

From the logs, wood products and renewable energy, to the construction and furniture and the pulp, packaging, board, tissue, and printing industries, the industries' focus on sustainable products and manufacturing processes not only reduces their environmental impact but also drives innovation and growth. Considering the sector's vast size, dynamism, and potential, the coalition aims at promoting the policy and market necessary conditions in the EU to scale-up the circular bioeconomy that our society so urgently needs.

The members of the coalition play a crucial role in the EU's pursuit of open strategic autonomy and will be an essential partner in driving the green transition of the economy. The forest-based bioeconomy sector's strategic nature is rooted in two key elements: its ability to provide a sustainable and low-carbon alternative to traditional fossil fuel-based industries, and its broad scope of integrated value-chains 'made in Europe' that supply to all 14 EU ecosystems.

The sector is also a hub of innovation and smart thinking, offering opportunities to improve yields, fibre properties, and disease resistance, as well as explore alternative uses for fibre and waste streams. Additionally, the development of bio-based products and processes can create new economic opportunities and jobs, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient society.

Policy recommendations

In 2024, the coalition members revised their key policy asks and messages. They drafted a series of recommendations, calling for a new approach to the economic and climate challenges we face. They stressed that the EU must lead the way in balancing industry and environment, and bioeconomy provides the perfect framework for this. Looking ahead, it is crucial that the EU institutions build on the 2024-2029 strategic agenda aimed at strengthening the European manufacturing value-chains to retain their globally competitive position while optimising the EU internal market for bioeconomy products to scale up on domestic markets. Through this holistic approach and a new European competitiveness deal, Europe could become the leading continent for investing in the circular bioeconomy and creating good quality jobs.

Events

Every 6 months, "Circular Choices" events are organised under each Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

On 13 November 2024, in Brussels, during the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Circular Choices Coalition together with European sectoral and social partners organised the event *"Good Industrial Jobs for the EU Bioeconomy."*

The discussions focused on how to ensure that the bioeconomy transition delivers high-quality, future-proof employment while maintaining industrial competitiveness. The event highlighted the need for policy coherence between industrial, environmental, and social objectives. Speakers stressed that the further development of bio-based products and processes in the upcoming years can create new economic opportunities and jobs, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient society. At the same time, such transformation requires young talent with new sets of skills as well as reskilling and upskilling the existing human resource. The event opened a discussion on EU competitiveness and how investing in skills training and good industrial jobs is critical to boost the EU's economic growth and competitiveness, thereby contributing to building the open strategic autonomy of Europe.

On 17 March 2025, the Circular Choices Coalition hosted the event *"EU Leadership in Bioeconomy as a Driver for Carbon Sequestration"* in Brussels. This gathering focused on the forest-based bioeconomy's pivotal role in the EU's climate strategy, particularly in light of the upcoming COP30. Discussions centered on enhancing carbon sequestration through sustainable forest management, biogenic carbon storage, and the utilisation of wood-based products. As a speaker for the event, CEI-Bois had put forward Anna Ervast Öberg, Chief of Operations at Folkhem, a Swedish housing developer renowned for its commitment to circular construction. Drawing from Folkhem's extensive experience in utilising wood as a primary building material, Ervast Öberg highlighted the significant carbon storage potential inherent in timber structures. She emphasised that integrating wood into construction not only reduces emissions but also offers a sustainable alternative to traditional materials. Her insights underscored the importance of aligning building practices with environmental goals to foster a circular economy.

4.1.5 United Nations Forum on Forests

At the beginning of May 2025, our Secretary General, Silvia Melegari, represented CEI-Bois in New York at the 20th United Nations Forum on Forests, championing the vital role of the European wood industries in advancing global forest goals and, in doing so, helping to deliver on broader climate and sustainability targets.

Across high-level meetings and side events, her key message was clear: *"Wood is essential to building a circular, climate-positive, and resilient bioeconomy: renewable, low carbon, versatile and a durable carbon sink"*.

The event highlighted the strategic role of the European wood sector in advancing a sustainable forest-based bioeconomy. CEI-Bois stressed that to fully unlock the potential of the forest-based bioeconomy, coherent policies and harmonised standards are needed, with key priorities including: strengthening green public procurement, updating building codes to reflect the sustainability and carbon storage benefits of timber, and promoting modern construction methods such as off-site building and renovation. Increased R&D investment for wood materials and new applications is also vital.

4.1.6 FAO Forestry Outlook Workshop

CEI-Bois Chair, Sampsa Auvinen, represented the EU timber industries at the Forestry Outlook Study 2030 and 2050 Workshop, held on 8-9 July 2025 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy.

The workshop gathered leading global experts and stakeholders to design scenarios on the future of the world's forests. Discussions explored how different pathways of forest restoration and forest product production could shape future forest cover, and what these changes would mean for carbon sequestration, food and nutrition security, and the forest-based bioeconomy.

Participants also examined long-term implications using advanced modelling tools, including GLOBIOM and G4M, to assess policy and market impacts up to 2050.

The presence of CEI-Bois at this high-level event ensured that the voice of the European timber industries was heard in shaping the global debate on sustainable forestry and the bioeconomy.

4.1.7 UNECE/FAO Forests Communicators' Network

On 27 May 2025, CEI-Bois took part in the "Framing the Future: Visual Strategies for a Positive Forestry Narrative" workshop in Brussels, a joint initiative of WoodPoP and the UNECE/FAO Forests Communicators' Network.



The workshop focused on how powerful imagery and storytelling can shape public perceptions of forests and sustainable wood use. The participants developed a set of guidelines for government agencies, international organisations, and NGOs on how to avoid fueling misconceptions using negative imagery and messages and, instead, build a positive narrative around forestry, including wood production.

The guidelines developed as the outcome of this workshop will be shared with partners and made available on the website of the Forests Communicators' Network and the WoodPoP homepage.

On 25 June 2025, CEI-Bois was also present at the Annual Workshop & Meeting of the UNECE/FAO Forests Communicators' Network in Edinburgh. The speakers shared insights on the future of forests in the face of climate and biodiversity challenges.

CEI-Bois took the opportunity to urge communicators to start with the problem, climate change, and show how forests and wood-based solutions are part of the answer. A clear invitation to communicate the role of forests, trees and wood in a sustainable future with clarity and purpose.

4.1.8 Forestry for the Future: Uniting Stakeholders for Climate Action and Sustainable Growth

On 28 May 2025, CEI-Bois Chair Sampsa Auvinen, was speaking at “Forestry for the Future: Uniting Stakeholders for Climate Action and Sustainable Growth” in Riga.

On this occasion, he stressed that wood availability in Europe is becoming increasingly uncertain. Climate challenges like drought, pests, and fires are only part of the picture. Market destabilisation from salvage logging and low-grade supply is another. And, increasingly, well-meaning but unbalanced legislation risks overlooking the need for a secure, sustainable raw material base.

He therefore reminded the audience that, in order to reach our climate and circular economy goals, production forests must be part of the solution, not treated as part of the problem. Certification schemes aren't just labels, they are a long-term commitment to sustainability and accountability. According to UNECE/FAO, over 70% of industrial roundwood in the EU came from certified forests in 2022. A powerful achievement and a foundation to build on.

4.1.9 Dubai Woodshow

Mid-April 2025, CEI-Bois was represented at the Dubai Woodshow, one of the key international events for the global timber industry. Our Chair, Sampsa Auvinen, took part in the WoodShow Forum, a unique opportunity to exchange views on current challenges and opportunities in our sector.

He delivered a talk on the “European Timber Market Outlook”, offering a timely perspective as our industry faces unprecedented levels of uncertainty. He also brought the wood paradox in the spotlight: the fact that policymakers and the general public love wood but worry about cutting trees. He stressed that this is a conversation that we need to have more often, explaining that harvesting wood, when done under sustainable forest management, is not deforestation. It's stewardship. It's ensuring forests grow healthier and stronger.

Moreover, he explained that while demand is rising globally and steadily, supply is increasingly challenging. Europe's raw material base is under pressure. Still, the outlook remains promising, as challenges are the drivers of innovation, efficiency, and smarter use of resources. Our industry is resilient and ready to shape a future where growth is sustainable and secure.

4.1.10 Construction 2050 Alliance

4.1.10.1 CEI-Bois cosigns letter to President von der Leyen

On 4 November 2024, ahead of the hearings of the Commissioner-designates at the EP, and following the political guidelines for her second mandate, CEI-Bois cosigned a letter of the Construction 2050 Alliance addressed a letter to Ursula von der Leyen, to emphasise the commitment and willingness of the construction industry to be a key partner in addressing Europe's housing and sustainability challenges.

The Construction 2050 Alliance expressed its support for the directions outlined in the political guidelines for the 2024-2029 mandate and was firm in its commitment to ensuring that the fundamental contribution made by the construction industry is recognised and supported by policymakers, with the aim of building tomorrow's Europe today.

In this letter to President von der Leyen, the Alliance emphasised three key areas in which the construction sector can play an essential role:

1. **Competitiveness and job creation:** The mission of strengthening Europe's social fairness while promoting economic growth aligns with the values and the essence of the construction industry. By investing in upskilling our workforce and promoting vocational training, we can help address the labour shortages currently affecting the sector, particularly in areas like green and digital skills. This is vital for Europe to maintain its competitive edge in a fast-changing global market, and to allow the construction industry to keep on being a pillar of employment and innovation. We welcome the proposed European Strategy for Housing Construction and your determination to support housing supply. Our sector is determined to cooperate with your Commission to deliver on this objective.
2. **Affordable and energy-efficient housing:** Your call for a European Affordable Housing Plan and the integration of housing with energy policy are timely and crucial. The construction sector has the full potential and is ready to contribute by building affordable homes and retrofitting poorly performing buildings meet high energy-efficiency standards. This aligns perfectly with the goals of the European Green Deal and the need to lower household energy bills while reducing carbon emissions. As mentioned in the mission letter to Commissioner-designate Dan Jørgensen, we fully support the plan to work with the European Investment Bank to mobilise and improve access to public and private financing for affordable housing.
3. **Sustainability and innovation:** The construction sector is at the forefront of innovative solutions that not only enhance housing affordability and make infrastructure more resilient but also drive Europe's clean energy transition. Through sustainable construction practices, the use of low-carbon solutions, and circular economy approaches, we are an enabling sector to help Europe meet its climate neutrality targets by 2050. Sustainable and energy efficient construction helps Europe to decarbonise its buildings. Furthermore, all segments of our sector have embarked in a decarbonisation pathway. We are eager to work alongside the European Commission to accelerate the uptake of green technologies and

contribute to the Clean Industrial Deal that could support the decarbonisation of energy-intensive sectors by delivering quicker and easier access to decarbonised energies at a competitive price.

4.1.10.2 Construction 2050 Alliance Manifesto 2025

On 25 March 2025, the Construction 2050 Alliance unveiled its Manifesto 2025, a strategic vision to shape Europe's built environment for the future. As a coalition of over 50 organisations across the entire construction value chain, the alliance is calling EU institutions to harness the full potential of Europe's construction sector.

Key priorities outlined in the Manifesto include:

- **Sustainability and net-zero:** more sustainable products, technologies, processes and energy solutions, combined with a holistic renovation approach, innovative financing and business models.
- **Circularity:** circular construction to increase competitiveness by improving resource efficiency, recycling and material reuse.
- **Competitiveness & affordability:** harmonisation, simplification and alignment of regulations and standards to allow for streamlining in all stages and types of construction.
- **Skills & quality jobs:** Union of Skills focusing on investment, adult and lifelong learning, skill retention and the recognition of different types of training.
- **Digitalisation & innovation:** embrace digital tools and innovative methods to move to further sustainability, enhanced competitiveness and affordability.



With the construction sector representing 10% of the EU's GDP and 25 million jobs, its role is crucial to achieving the EU's economic, social, and environmental goals. This Manifesto underscores the sector's ability to drive forward decarbonisation, affordable housing, and competitiveness, all while reinforcing the need for a structured dialogue.

4.1.11 Built by Nature's annual summit

On 7 November 2024, CEI-Bois Public Affairs Director, Paul Brannen, was interviewed in front of an audience of 'front runners' at Built by Nature's annual summit.

Built by Nature (BbN) exists to create and support a network of pioneering developers, architects and engineers, asset owners and managers, investors and insurers, city lead-

ers, academics, researchers, non-profits and policymakers in their journey to decarbonise our built environment and protect nature.

Paul Brannen was interviewed by Tamara Streefland, Head of Programmes at BbN, with the theme being the current and future policy environment in Brussels and across Europe in relation to timber and other nature-based solutions - in the context of the built environment. Questions included: 'Where are we? Where should we go? Who drives the change? What is the recipe for success?'



The ensuing wide-ranging discussion saw mention of the Commission's proposed 2040 target of 90 per cent emissions reductions, the EU election results, the arrival of housing as a major issue including a Commissioner with responsibility, the increasing recognition of the importance of removals, the continuation of the New European Bauhaus, the energy efficiency of buildings and the survival and repackaging of the Green Deal.

There was an interesting exchange on whether the Commission's longstanding material neutrality position is sustainable in the face of the mounting evidence that nature-based materials are better for the climate and healthy living.

The interview ended with CEI-Bois making a call to action around our existing level of understanding, knowledge and expertise being more than enough to deliver at least a 15 per cent reduction in global carbon emissions via a significant shift to nature-based building materials. What we need is greater recognition of this potential from politicians backed by their loud support for a transition to nature-based construction and renovation. This in turn would give industry the confidence to ramp up both the speed and scale of the production of nature-based materials for the built environment. Essentially, we need the equivalent of a war time economy that being 'A climate focused economy'.

4.1.12 Wood policy and innovation conference

CEI-Bois took an active part in the preparation of the "Wood policy and innovation conference" that was organised in Brussels on 7 November 2024 and which highlighted the vital role of the wood sector as a key driver of future competitiveness in housing and the climate debate, encouraging greater recognition and support from the new EU Commission and EU Parliament.

It showcased the latest state-of-the art in building design with wood and how the public sector can support more biobased construction to combat climate change.



Members of the European Parliament and their staff, EC staff and experts, policy makers, and advocacy organisations were invited to join this policy discussion and networking event, in which over 160 participants attended in person.

The event was coorganised by Wood4Bauhaus Alliance, Bioregions, woodPoP and Holzcluster Steiermark.

4.1.13 Ecomondo event

On 8 November 2024, CEI-Bois held an online presentation on “Wood in construction: EU policies and initiatives” during one of the events taking place under the auspices of Ecomondo - The Green Technology Expo 2024 in Rimini, Italy.

The “Conference on Wood and biomaterials for construction: a path to decarbonisation and circular economy” was organised by Ecomondo STC & Confagricoltura (General Confederation of Italian Agriculture), AlberItalia Foundation, and the National Cluster Forestry-Wood. Its stated objective was to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the biobased sector for a reflection on what levers should be activated to spread a model of housing and construction with lower impact, greater efficiency, and more linked to the resources of the territory, at competitive costs.

In its presentation, CEI-Bois informed the audience about its advocacy activities in Brussels, the most relevant EU policies potentially supporting the use of wood in construction (recast EPBD, new CPR, Carbon Removals Certification Framework), as well as other essential non-legislative initiatives (WoodPoP, New European Bauhaus, new Commissioner for Housing).

Attendees were also informed about the Wood Policy Innovation Workshop 2024, co-organised by CEI-Bois, and which had taken place the day before in Brussels.

4.1.14 POLITICO Sustainable Future Week Europe

On 3 December 2024, CEI-Bois attended the POLITICO Sustainable Future Week Europe, specifically the session dedicated to climate policy and the EU Green Deal. Of particular importance to CEI-Bois were the discussions on “Beyond the Green Deal: what future for EU green policies?” and “Carbon crunch time: removals, storage, can Europe have it all?”.

During the first talk, policymakers such as MEP Sara Matthieu (Greens/EFA, Belgium) and Ms Yvon Slingenberg (Director at DG CLIMA) outlined the main challenges, opportunities, and potential solutions associated with the implementation of the Green Deal in an international context of competition and geopolitical uncertainty, as well as doing it in way that secure societal buy-in within the EU.

Mr Christian Holzleitner (Head of Unit at DG CLIMA) was one of the panellists in the second discussion, which centered around the important role that carbon removals are expected to play in the EU's goals of a 90% emission reduction target in 2040, carbon neutrality in 2050, and carbon negativity beyond 2050. Carbon storage in biobased construction products was mentioned alongside other industrial and land-based carbon removal activities.

4.2 EU Deforestation Regulation

The information reported here represents only a selection of the EUDR advocacy activities carried out by CEI-Bois. Some details and actions remain confidential. Moreover, as discussions on this topic are ongoing and continuously evolving, parts of this information may become outdated.

4.2.1 Background

The EUDR aims to ensure that certain commodities and products placed on the EU market are deforestation-free and produced in accordance with the laws of the country of production. Commodities covered include cattle, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, rubber, soy and wood (as well as products derived thereof) when placed on the EU market or exported from the EU. The EUDR is expected to replace the earlier EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) for timber products.

The regulation's main obligations were originally scheduled to start for large/medium sized operators on 30 December 2024.

Late 2024, the EU institutions approved a 12-month delay: making applicability from 30 December 2025 for large and medium enterprises, and 30 June 2026 for micro and small enterprises.



The Commission also introduced the Benchmarking Implementing Regulation in May 2025, which classifies countries of sourcing of commodities into risk categories (high, standard, or low). It also has sought to simplify and clarify aspects of the EUDR implementation through the publication of guidance documents and Frequently Asked Questions.

Despite the one-year postponement and the publication of the Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions document, the EUDR remains affected by legal uncertainty. For this reason, CEI-Bois has been advocating -on several occasions- for legally binding simplifications and has called for the inclusion of the EUDR in the Omnibus initiative.

Indeed, the postponement did not suffice to resolve the challenges and avoid negative implication arising from the current text of the EUDR. CEI-Bois called for a simplification to provide concrete solutions to persisting proportionality and feasibility issues and to restore legal certainty for economic operators. To date, such legal certainty, a general principle of EU law enshrined in Article 2 TEU and consistently upheld by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and proportionality, another general principle of EU law outlined in Article 5 (4) TEU, is manifestly lacking.

The European Commission has issued several non-binding documents, including Guidelines and "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)", intended to clarify certain obligations under the EUDR. While these instruments may have practical relevance, they do not constitute legally binding acts within the meaning of Article 288 TFEU, nor can they be regarded as providing an authentic interpretation of Union law. Consequently, they do not create legitimate expectations upon which operators may rely before national courts or EU jurisdictions.

In addition, there are no improvements to respond to the key concerns which have been frequently and intensively put forward by our organisations. Subsequent demands are still valid and urgently need to be addressed. If we want an EUDR that is implementable, we need to have targeted simplification in the Regulation. Copy of one of the joint statements published by CEI-Bois is reported below.

20 February 2025

Joint Statement

A call for simplifications of EUDR reporting via the Omnibus package

The undersigned European primary producers and various industries continuously supported the objectives of the EUDR and repeatedly shared feedback to encourage its efficient implementation. Unfortunately, after entry into force of the Regulation, serious issues of excessive reporting complexity became evident. While we welcome the additional 12-months phase in period, introduced in December 2024, solutions to persisting proportionality and feasibility issues are still pending.

We acknowledge that the Commission is trying to achieve simplifications for EUDR implementation by updating the FAQs and Guidance. However, these supporting documents do not have a legal value and therefore cannot guarantee legal certainty for concerned operators and traders. In our view, the Commission's commitments for simplification highlighted in the Commission Work Programme for 2025, and specifically the announced Omnibus Simplification package, offer an important opportunity to adequately facilitate the EUDR's implementation.

We welcome the Commission's commitments to reduce reporting requirements

Over the past years, administrative burden for operators, specifically reporting requirements have increased significantly. This growing complexity is associated with disproportionate costs, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).¹ Negative effects on supply-chains are inevitable.

In this context, European primary producers and various industries welcome the Commission's simplification commitments made in the Communication "A Competitiveness Compass for the EU". Specifically, we commend the concrete target to ensure a reduction of reporting burden by at least 25% for all companies and at least 35% for SMEs. We acknowledge that the Competitiveness Compass announced the Omnibus package (expected on 26 February) as a crucial first step towards implementing these important targets.

We strongly encourage the inclusion of the EUDR in the Omnibus Simplification package



4.2.2 Call for evidence “Simplification of Administrative Burden in Environmental Legislation”

During the summer, the European Commission collected feedback on the Simplification of Administrative Burden in Environmental Legislation until 10 September. Although the call for evidence specifically requested concrete examples of reporting duplications and potential ways to streamline reporting or notification obligations, CEI-Bois submitted a contribution calling for the inclusion of the EUDR in the Omnibus initiative.

Response to the call for evidence “Simplification of Administrative Burden in Environmental Legislation”

The Regulation on Deforestation-free Products (EUDR), as currently implemented, risks becoming a textbook example of disproportionate administrative burden, particularly for SMEs. The combination of complex obligations, high compliance costs, and the legal uncertainty created by non-binding guidelines reduces competitiveness and undermines confidence in the EU regulatory framework.

Simplification must therefore go beyond merely reducing reporting layers. It must provide companies with legally certain, proportionate, and harmonised compliance pathways.

While the European Commission has issued guidelines to support implementation, their non-binding nature generates significant legal uncertainty. Companies are forced to choose between following guidance that lacks legal status (and may later be rejected or modified by competent authorities) or investing in stricter, alternative compliance systems. This ambiguity risks creating divergent practices across Member States, exposing especially SMEs to additional enforcement actions and possible litigation despite their best efforts to comply.

Under the EUDR, SMEs face the same obligations as large operators for any product not already covered by a due diligence exercise and remain fully liable in case of non-compliance. In practice, this means that all wood sector companies, including SMEs, are subject to the Regulation and must complete the entire due diligence process and submit a due diligence statement, regardless of their limited capacity and resources. This “one-size-fits-all” approach is disproportionate. By imposing identical administrative and legal burdens on SMEs and multinational operators alike, the EUDR risks creating barriers to market access, discouraging operators in the value chain, particularly small ones, from placing timber on the market, and ultimately undermining the competitiveness and diversity of the EU forest-based sector. Rather than levelling the playing field, the current framework imposes equally excessive regulatory and compliance obligations on both large and small companies alike.

Furthermore, the approach of placing the same legal responsibility on all actors along the value-chain is highly problematic. Repeating submissions of due diligence state-

ments in each part of long and complex value-chains creates disproportionate administrative burden, with questionable added-value to the aim of the regulation. Focusing due diligence and controls to the beginning of the value chain is a more effective approach, as efforts are focused on the part of the value chain where non-compliant material can be effectively stopped. Meanwhile full traceability and control over all commodities entering a value chain can be maintained.

Any system established by the European Commission should target the real drivers of deforestation, while remaining sufficiently simple and practical for operators to use effectively, including the smallest ones.

It is also important to underline that the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), in force since 2013, created a targeted system to address illegal logging through due diligence obligations for timber operators. Over the past decade, the timber sector invested heavily in compliance systems, certification schemes, and enforcement practices. Instead of strengthening enforcement and closing gaps in the EUTR, the Commission has replaced it entirely with the EUDR – a broader framework covering not only timber but also agricultural commodities such as soy, beef, coffee, cocoa, and palm oil. This shift has diluted the specificities of the forest and wood sector into a generic “one-size-fits-all” approach, while duplicating compliance costs for companies.

The obligation to pass on reference numbers and the verification of due diligence statements in the single market are particularly problematic. The result of the current legislative interpretation is millions of data records on a daily basis, and high costs for maintaining and verifying these. The attempt of complete traceability envisaged by the EUDR is only possible in theory. It requires high-end warehouse management systems, traceable and hence identifiable pieces of timber plus embedded, fully automated data recording and transfer. Only, if at all, a few large companies in the timber industry can afford this effort - without any benefit to reducing deforestation rates worldwide.

It is reasonable to assume that transfer and inspection within the EU have only been included in the EUDR because some member states have implemented the existing EU Timber Regulation EUTR poorly. Consequently, the responsibility for inspecting goods from EU countries where the EUDR is barely implemented, is shifted to traders in all EU countries - a considerable competitive disadvantage.

We therefore call for the abolition of the obligation to pass on reference numbers and due diligence checks for trade within the European Economic Area (EEA). Instead, it must be ensured that the EUDR is fully and evenly implemented at the EEA's external borders.

The EUDR would benefit from adopting a much stronger risk-based approach. Obligations should be clearly differentiated according to the level of deforestation risk. Such

an approach would ensure proportionality, safeguard competitiveness, and increase the effectiveness of the Regulation by focusing resources where they can deliver the greatest environmental impact.

To create a better balance between environmental protection and economic viability, we also propose to establish a “no risk” classification for countries with negligible deforestation risks. This category would streamline requirements, limiting them to basic documentation rather than requiring full due diligence.

In light of the all the above, we strongly emphasise the need to incorporate the EUDR into a forthcoming Omnibus initiative and to stop-the-clock for all specific entry into force dates by at least two years, which provides enough time for a thorough re-assessment of the current Regulation.

4.2.3 Proposal to amend the EU Deforestation Regulation

On 21 October 2025, the European Commission published COM(2025)652, a proposal to amend the EU Deforestation Regulation. The amendment claims to simplify compliance obligations for operators and traders, without changing the Regulation's core environmental objectives.

This new proposal postpones entry of the EUDR into application only for micro-undertakings or small undertakings. The Proposal also contains several substantive amendments aimed at reducing obligations imposed on small EU primary producers, and providing for a grace period to allow businesses to adapt to the legislative changes.

A new category, “micro and small primary operators,” is also introduced, for which there would be no obligation to submit due diligence statements (“DDSs”) on a continuous basis. However, such operators would be required to submit a one-time simplified declaration in the Information System. A simplified declaration may contain either geo-locations or the postal address of all plots of land where the relevant commodities that the relevant product contains, or has been made using, were produced. The Information System would assign a declaration identifier to such declarations, which identifier would need to be passed downstream.

The proposal eliminates obligations to ascertain that due diligence was exercised upstream and to submit a DDS for downstream operators and traders. However, the obligation to collect and pass on DDS reference numbers remains. Downstream operators and traders are also required to collect and pass on declaration identifiers assigned to micro and small primary operators. In addition, non-SME downstream operators and traders would need to register in the Information System.

According to this new proposal, entry into application for large and medium undertakings would remain unchanged, 30 December 2025 (no postponement). Entry into application for micro- and small undertakings established as such as of 31 December 2024 would be postponed to 30 December 2026. Entry into application for micro- and small primary operators would be set for 30 December 2026. The Proposal also envisages a grace period until 30 June 2026 for checks and enforcement by competent authorities with respect to large and medium undertakings. This means that while medium and large operators/traders must comply with the EUDR starting from 30 December 2025, the competent authorities would not conduct checks until 30 June 2026 to enable these stakeholders to adapt. At the same time, the competent authorities would be able to issue warnings and recommendations to achieve compliance where they become aware of non-compliance.

4.2.4 What next?

The proposal will be considered by the European Parliament and the Council, which must formally adopt the targeted amendments before they take effect and can propose further amendments. The Commission has called for adoption of the proposal by 30 December 2025.

Following this new proposal a coalition of EU organisations published an open statement reported here.

A Call to 'Stop the Clock' and Ensure a Workable EU Deforestation Regulation

The signatories of this open statement recall that the effectiveness of any legislative framework depends on its workability, legal clarity, and predictability. The recent amendments proposed by the European Commission to the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) after the announcement of a further postponement on 23 September, prolong a situation of costly uncertainty and unrealistic implementation timelines. The new proposal, and the very challenging timeline to have it approved, risks undermining both the credibility and the practical enforcement of the Regulation, while placing European operators in an untenable position of legal and operational uncertainty.

The changes introduced by the Commission are substantial and deserve appropriate time for stakeholders, policy makers and Member States to analyse and discuss them. This is exceptionally difficult considering the deadline of 30 December 2025 currently in place. It's unrealistic and unacceptable to expect that companies will be ready to comply right away with a regulation that has been hastily renegotiated only few weeks before entry into application. In fact, most large downstream industries will not be in the position to adapt again their IT systems, which have been designed to interact with the TRACES platform, whereas small and micro downstream operators will be faced with a much larger number of DDS reference numbers as these accumulate along the value chain. Downstream operators of all sizes will face compliance problems with the new rules, which in the best-case scenario will be adopted only few days before the entry into application.

The proposal further fails to reflect the operational reality of the market, where medium-sized and large companies routinely interact with small and micro-enterprises within integrated supply chains. As a result, establishing different application dates – with large and medium enterprises required to comply from 30 December 2025, and small and micro-enterprises benefiting from twelve additional months, will, in practice, force all operators to comply from the same date. The interdependence of companies within the value chain makes the proposed postponement illusory, as smaller operators will be required to align immediately to maintain business relations.

Our sectors continue to face a serious deficit of clarity and legal certainty, which conflicts with a fundamental right guaranteed under EU law and which remains indispensable for sound business operations, competitiveness, and investment.

We therefore urge the European Commission to introduce a “stop-the-clock” mechanism that allows for policymakers to have a proper and a comprehensive assessment of the Regulation's impact and implementation. Such a reassessment should aim to identify genuine simplification measures and to render the EUDR obligations truly workable, while fully preserving the Regulation's legitimate environmental objective of combating deforestation, a goal strongly supported by the signatories of this open statement.



4.3 Sustainability and Forests Related Issues

4.3.1 Bioeconomy Strategy

As announced in several official EU documents, including the Competitiveness Compass and the Clean Industrial Deal, the European Commission has been preparing this year a new Bioeconomy Strategy.

As per the European Commission's thinking, the Bioeconomy Strategy will promote the more circular and sustainable production and consumption of biological resources for food, materials, energy and services, providing potential alternatives to fossil fuels. It will be aimed at farmers, foresters, industry and businesses, particularly SMEs and startups of the EU and its rural and coastal areas. It will help them close the innovation gap and make a success of the green transition. The strategy will also aim to reduce the pressure on the limited resources through innovation in primary production, increased circularity, and resource efficiency. It will moreover address barriers and identify drivers for bioeconomy innovations and solutions to reach the market.

Throughout 2025, several preparatory activities have taken place in view of the Bioeconomy Strategy's drafting, and CEI-Bois has been an active stakeholder in the discussions. The strategy's publication is expected by the end of the year.

4.3.1.1 Stakeholders Dialogue on the New EU Bioeconomy Strategy

In May 2025, CEI-Bois joined Jessika Roswall, European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and Competitive Circular Economy, at the Stakeholders Dialogue on the New EU Bioeconomy Strategy. CEI-Bois highlighted the essential role of wood and wood-based products in delivering on the EU's climate and Competitiveness goals. We also welcomed the Commissioner's recognition of the bioeconomy's potential and reaffirmed our sector's commitment to scaling sustainable wood solutions.



4.3.1.2 Reply to European Commission call for evidence and public consultation

Over the spring and summer of 2025, the European Commission ran a call for evidence and public consultation, to which CEI-Bois replied, calling on the European Commission to "integrate wood and wood applications more prominently into the Bioeconomy Strategy by implementing targeted policy support for Harvested Wood Products (HWP). By doing so, the EU will strengthen its "Made in Europe" approach and its commitment to sustainability, innovation, self-sufficiency and economic growth while leveraging one of Europe's most valuable directly available natural resources."

Moreover, in autumn, a leaked draft of the Bioeconomy Strategy was in circulation as the European Commission was informally and unofficially collecting stakeholder feedback. CEI-Bois therefore held a meeting of its Sustainability Working Group to discuss the leaked draft and gather feedback on positive and negative aspects, as well as proposals for improvement.

Among the positive aspects of the leaked draft, the following can be highlighted:

- Bio-based construction products were listed among the “lead markets with the highest potential for systemic decarbonisation”;
- An accurate description of bio-based construction materials, including “The climate benefits of replacing energy-intensive products (e.g. concrete) by bio-based alternatives are further enhanced by the carbon sequestration potential of these materials”;
- The recognition “that bio-based materials also store carbon”.

At the same time, the leaked draft also contained some concerning aspects:

- “Bio-based construction materials” are placed towards the end of the list of lead markets;
- An over-emphasis on “biochemicals, biopolymers and bioplastics” at expense of more developed aspects of bioeconomy (e.g. bio-based construction products);
- A lack of recognition of the massive amounts of necessary biomass if the bioeconomy is to expand to its full potential (a risk that the potential for growth of the bioeconomy is not fully recognised);
- A failure to recognise the tension between the European Commission’s aspirations for a large, dynamic, and successful bioeconomy on the one hand, and existing EU policies that undermine biomass production (e.g. LULUCF Regulation, biodiversity rules, etc.) on the other hand;
- It introduces for the first time the term “low-impact harvesting methods” (unclear what it means and if it could result in lower harvest rates).

These and several other CEI-Bois observations on the leaked draft of the Bioeconomy Strategy were subsequently shared with European Commission representatives.

4.3.2 Carbon Removals Certification Framework

4.3.2.1 Adoption of Carbon Removals Certification Framework

In November 2024, the EU institutions adopted the Regulation for an EU Carbon Removals Certification Framework (CRCF). Published in the Official Journal of the EU on 6 December 2024, the new regulation entered into force at the end of the year.

The voluntary framework seeks to facilitate and encourage high-quality carbon removal and soil emission reduction activities in the EU, as a complement to sustained emission reductions. The carbon removal activities falling under the CRCF include carbon storage activities that capture and store carbon in long-lasting products for at least 35 years (such as wood-based construction products).

According to Article 8 of the CRCF, the Commission shall adopt Delegated Acts to establish certification methodologies; in the case of carbon storage in products, the Commission shall prioritise certification methodologies for wood-based and bio-based construction products. Therefore, the parallel work of the Expert Group on Carbon Removals has continued throughout 2025.

4.3.2.2 DG CLIMA takes part in CEI-Bois Sustainability Working Group

On 4 April, DG CLIMA joined the CEI-Bois Sustainability working group to present the EU's climate policy priorities. The twin objectives of reducing CO₂ emissions and increasing carbon removals were outlined, particularly to address hard-to-abate sectors.

DG CLIMA emphasised the importance of a circular carbon economy, which aims to keep sequestered carbon out of the atmosphere for as long as possible, and highlighted the need for robust monitoring and verification of carbon removals and storage, noting that this is the central goal of the EU Carbon Removals Certification Regulation (CRCF), which entered into force in December 2024.

DG CLIMA underlined the close links between the LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry) sector and the forthcoming Bioeconomy Strategy, announcing a workshop on the evaluation of the LULUCF Regulation. This event was also going to address the rules on Harvested Wood Products. DG CLIMA reminded participants of the Call for Evidence for the Bioeconomy Strategy.

Following this presentation, CEI-Bois members engaged in a lively exchange on these issues, including the role of wood-based materials in climate mitigation. The meeting also featured a presentation on timber's carbon storage potential in the built environment, with figures derived from UK data that could be replicated across Europe.

In the UK, the newly elected government has launched a major housebuilding programme aiming for 1.5 million new homes over five years. This has spurred growing interest in timber construction as a low-carbon alternative, with national media highlighting the trend. The Financial Times asked, "Brick shortage threatens to stall UK housebuilding – is wood the answer?", while the Daily Telegraph reported, "More houses to be built out of wood under Labour's net zero plan." The government's Timber in Construction Roadmap has received ministerial backing, recognising timber as a renewable, low-carbon resource that can reduce emissions, create jobs, and accelerate the delivery of sustainable housing.

The data presented to the Sustainability working group illustrated this potential: a timber-framed family home can store around 8 tonnes of CO₂e (4.6 tCO₂e in the structure and 3.5 tCO₂e in wood fibre insulation), while mass timber buildings can store up to 1,000 tCO₂e per project—plus an additional 20% with wood fibre insulation. According to estimates by London-Berlin architects dRMM, scaling up timber construction could enable the UK to store 8.5 million tonnes of CO₂e annually, equivalent to the country's current target for its emerging Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) programme.

4.3.2.3 Draft EU rules on certifying permanent carbon removals

In July 2025, the European Commission published a draft of the first such Delegated Acts, specifically a draft Delegated Act (DA) on the certification methodology for permanent carbon removals. Generally, the draft text usefully acknowledged that additional biomass consumption for DACCS, BioCCS or biochar production should be limited to waste and residues or otherwise respect the cascading use principle (in line with the Renewable Energy Directive). However, paragraph 4.3.3 of the Annex provision introduced a voluntary compensation mechanism for the use of saw logs as biomass feedstock in carbon removal activities.

As soon as the draft DA was publicly available, already prior to the official launch of the public consultation, CEI-Bois, EPF and EOS jointly addressed a letter to DG CLIMA, expressing serious concerns about the contested provision, and requesting its deletion. It was underlined that this measure could:

- Undermine the material value of wood, already recognised in EU law as a long-lived carbon storage solution in construction.
- Set a dangerous precedent by legitimising offsetting practices that disregard the climate benefits of wood-based products.
- Contradict existing EU safeguards, notably the cascading use obligations under RED Article 3(3), as well as the Union's bioeconomy and circularity goals.

The federations warned that, even if framed as "voluntary," the provision could legitimise the burning of high-quality saw logs under the guise of carbon removal offsets, directly at odds with EU ambitions to promote sustainable biomass use in material applications and the decarbonisation of the built environment.

DG CLIMA provided an official and written reply, clarifying that "Our aim with the provision in paragraph 4.3.3 of the Annex is to precisely recognise and encourage actions contributing to the preservation and restauration of natural sinks, as well as the strengthening of the bioeconomy value chains by ensuring the wood industry is adequately supplied with high-quality biomass in compliance with the cascading use obligations".

CEI-Bois reiterated its request for a deletion of paragraph 4.3.3 of the Annex during the subsequent and official Commission call for feedback, as well as during a meeting with DG CLIMA.

CEI-Bois is now awaiting the adoption of the DA by the European Commission, with indications that the controversial provision will eventually be removed.



We are also expecting draft DAs on carbon farming, forestry activities, and most importantly on the carbon storage in products.

4.3.3 Clean Industrial Deal

In February 2025, CEI-Bois informed about the publication of the European Commission's Clean Industrial Deal (CID), summarising the key elements relevant to the wood industry. The CID aims at enhancing industrial competitiveness while accelerating decarbonisation. It focuses on supporting energy-intensive industries and clean technologies, mobilising over €100 billion in clean industrial investments, and ensuring climate neutrality by 2050.

A first assessment indicates these areas of the CID as relevant for the woodworking industries:

- **Bio-based materials:** The EC will also propose a Bioeconomy Strategy, to improve resource efficiency and to tap the significant growth potential of bio-based materials substituting fossil-based materials, and related industries. This can also further reduce dependencies on imported raw materials. The new bioeconomy sectoral plan will lay down priorities for manufacturing and using biomaterials, and for retaining them as long as possible in the economy.
- **Circular economy:** The EU aims to become a global leader in the circular economy by 2030 by: Circular Economy Act (2026), harmonisation of recycling rules for secondary materials, mandatory eco-design principles to increase recyclability, creation of Trans-Regional Circularity Hubs for resource-sharing between industries, tax incentives.
- **Construction:** The EC will assess how to include requirements and non-price criteria in relevant product legislation, such as low-carbon steel, renewables or sustainable battery cells for cars and corporate fleets as well as building codes. There must be a clear link between incentives for decarbonisation and circularity efforts by industry. Product labelling for industrial products, accompanied by the right incentives, is a powerful tool to speed-up the transition to decarbonised manufacturing and ensure the manufacturers can reap the "green premium" and generate a return on their decarbonisation investments. Linking this label to public procurement will encourage manufacturers to use it. To be noted - "A label for cement will be created under the Construction Products Regulation, and a standardisation request will shortly be lodged."
- **Skills development and just transition for workers:** To ensure a fair and inclusive industrial transformation, the Clean Industrial Deal includes measures to support workers and businesses establishing a Union of Skills (2025), a Quality Jobs Roadmap (2025) and a Fair Transition Observatory (2026).

4.3.4 Circular Economy

4.3.4.1 Call for evidence and a public consultation on the EU Circular Economy Act

In August 2025, the European Commission launched a call for evidence and a public consultation on the forthcoming EU Circular Economy Act (CEA), expected for publication by the end of 2026.

The main objective of the CEA is to accelerate the transition to the circular economy in the EU. It will target several obstacles, such as the lack of sufficient demand and supply for secondary raw materials (including critical ones) and the fragmentation of the single market for circular products, waste and secondary raw materials.

The CEA's envisaged interventions can be structured around two main pillars:

- Address e-waste (electronic and electrical equipment), the fastest growing waste stream at 2% per year, of which less than 40% is recycled, to ensure its effective collection and recycling and to generate market demand for the secondary critical raw materials they contain. Existing rules may need to be revised to make them fit-for-purpose and simpler;
- A mix of interventions to foster the single market for waste, secondary raw materials and their use in products could be considered. This may cover, among others, the reform of end of waste criteria, the simplification, digitalisation and extension of extended producer responsibility schemes, and setting mandatory, targeted, impactful, and implementable criteria for public procurement of circular goods, services and works to stimulate EU demand.

CEI-Bois has collected members' feedback to prepare a coordinated response to the call for evidence and the public consultation.

In engaging with the CEA process and preparing for its adoption, CEI-Bois will continue the internal discussions on topics of specific interest, such as:

- Minimum mandatory recycled content.
- End of waste criteria.
- Extended producer responsibility.
- Standards for recovered construction timber (via CPR-2024).

4.3.5 Webinar on the circular economy of wood products

Event announcement

At the initiative of the Federation of the Finnish Woodworking Industries and with the contribution of its members, CEI-Bois will be holding a Webinar on "The circular economy of wood products" on 9 December 2025, starting at 13:00 CET.

Circularity and the Circular Economy are priority topics for the new European Commission, as exemplified by the upcoming EU Circular Economy Act, which makes the webinar timely and relevant.

As clarified in the concept note that was sent to the members, the webinar aims to present and exchange insights on how different European countries are promoting the circular economy of wood products both at national and EU levels. The event intends

to bring together CEI-Bois members, their member companies, research institutes, and value-chain stakeholders to share examples of projects, good practices, and policy developments that support wood circularity.

Interested CEI-Bois members had the opportunity to suggest relevant projects and/or speakers for the programme.

4.3.6 Simplification of environmental legislation

4.3.6.1 Trinomics assessment of environmental reporting and potential for simplification

After having attended an online meeting organised by the consultancy Trinomics, CEI-Bois received the invitation to provide input to a dedicated consultation on the “*assessment of environmental reporting and the potential for simplification*”. The goal of this consultation was to gather information on business and Member States reporting costs, as well as ideas for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of reporting.

This study was commissioned by the European Commissions’ Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) and it focused on identifying and quantifying reporting costs imposed on businesses by environmental legislation, aiming to simplify and streamline obligations while maintaining regulatory effectiveness.

Key findings:

- **Broad scope of obligations:** There are approximately 103 reporting obligations (ROs) across 41 legislative acts directly impacting businesses. These obligations require companies to report to Member States, consumers, the EU, or national authorities, often resulting in overlapping requirements.
- **High administrative costs:** Reporting costs are a subset of administrative burdens, including labour costs (staff time spent on reporting), IT system expenses (software, data management tools), consultancy and compliance costs (external expertise, audits), training and internal capacity-building for regulatory compliance.
- **Unclear cost data:** While some impact assessments include estimates of reporting costs, data is often incomplete. Costs vary significantly across businesses and countries due to differences in IT infrastructure, reporting practices, and enforcement mechanisms.

Challenges and burdens:

- **Overlapping and redundant reporting:** Companies frequently report the same data multiple times under different directives, increasing compliance costs.
- **Lack of harmonisation:** Reporting formats and methodologies differ between Member States, making compliance particularly burdensome for multinational companies.
- **Complexity and resource strain:** Many businesses, particularly SMEs, struggle with unclear reporting guidelines, excessive data collection requirements, and IT system inefficiencies.

The study identifies several opportunities to reduce unnecessary burdens while maintaining environmental oversight:

- **Harmonising reporting requirements:** Streamlining data collection across multiple directives to eliminate redundancies.
- **Implementing digital solutions:** Expanding automated reporting and integrated digital platforms (e.g., Reportnet) to reduce manual data submission.
- **Applying the “once-only” principle:** Ensuring companies submit data only once, with authorities sharing information where possible.
- **Clarifying guidelines and definitions:** Standardising reporting criteria, thresholds, and exemptions, especially for SMEs and highly regulated sectors.

4.3.6.2 EC call for evidence on the simplification of environmental legislation

The Trinomics study represented the first phase of a wider stakeholder engagement. Subsequently, the European Commission also gathered input on reducing administrative burdens in environmental legislation via a call for evidence. In September 2025, CEI-Bois submitted feedback focusing primarily on the EUDR but covering also the Nature Restoration Law. CEI-Bois argued that the EUDR, as currently implemented, risks becoming a textbook case of disproportionate burden, especially for SMEs.

Key points from our response:

- The EUDR imposes complex, costly, and legally uncertain compliance obligations, especially harmful to SMEs.
- Non-binding Commission guidelines create ambiguity, risking uneven enforcement and litigation across Member States.
- A “one-size-fits-all” approach places identical burdens on SMEs and large operators, threatening market access and competitiveness.
- Repeated due diligence checks along long value chains create disproportionate administrative burden with limited added value.
- The regulation duplicates costs by replacing the targeted EUTR system with a broader framework that ignores wood sector specificities.
- Full traceability requirements lead to massive data demands that only large players can manage, without clear deforestation benefits.
- Calls are made for a stronger risk-based approach, reduced intra-EEA checks, a “no-risk” country category, and a 2-year delay to reassess the Regulation.

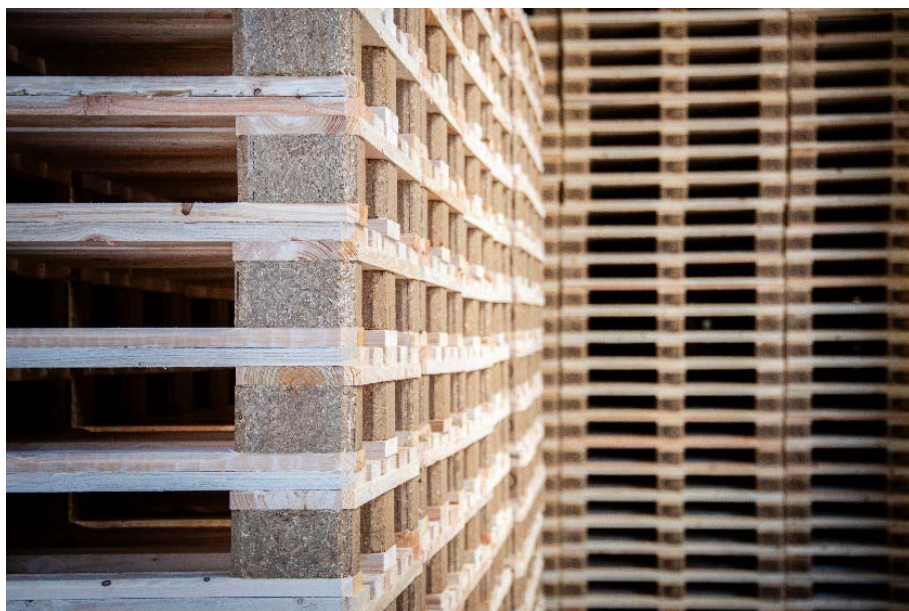
As regards the Nature Restoration law, CEI-Bois proposed the following:

- Limit obligations to Natura 2000 areas.
- Abandon “no deterioration” obligations outside Natura 2000.
- Respect property rights and voluntary participation.
- Adjust national restoration plan timelines and requirements.
- Reduce and flexibilise forest indicators.
- Recognise climate-adaptive forest management.
- Mitigate economic and bureaucratic burdens.

4.3.7 Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation

Following a long legislative process, during which CEI-Bois has supported FEFPEB (its sectoral member specialising in wooden packaging and pallets) in their advocacy efforts, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) was adopted by the EU institutions at the end of 2024 and was registered in the Official Journal of the EU in January 2025. It entered into force on 11 February 2025 and it will apply from 12 August 2026.

CEI-Bois will proceed with monitoring this regulation during the implementation phase under the guidance of FEFPEB, in particular in relation to the European Commission's drafting and publication of Delegated Acts, and it will intervene as necessary.



4.3.8 Green Claims Directive (GCD)

The Green Claims Directive (GCD) was proposed by the European Commission in March 2023 to ensure that voluntary environmental claims (e.g., “eco-friendly”, “climate-neutral”, “packaging made of 30 % recycled plastic”) are credible, comparable and verifiable.

Throughout 2025, CEI-Bois has continued to monitor the legislative developments, particularly in relation to Article 1, which remains of special importance as it establishes a list of sectoral legislation exempting from compliance with the GCD.

The legislative process reached the trilogue stage, with the first such interinstitutional negotiation having taken place on 28 January. The second trilogue was held on 24 April, and the negotiations focused on claims and labels and labelling schemes, information to consumers and verification, and access to justice and penalties. In June 2025,

however, the European Commission announced its intention to withdraw the proposal, citing concerns about including very small micro-enterprises (30 million in the EU), and the burdens it might impose. The Commission later clarified that the proposal has not yet been formally withdrawn, but no progress is expected in the near term. The third trilogue, scheduled for 23 June 2025, was therefore cancelled.

CEI-Bois will continue monitoring the dossier and inform member as necessary.

4.3.9 Climate Law amendment: 2040 climate target

In July 2025, the European Commission tabled a legislative proposal to amend the Climate Law to include a 2040 target of a 90% net reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions (relative to 1990 levels). The proposal also allows, from 2036 onwards, the possibility for the EU to count up to 3% of 1990-level emissions via high-quality international credits under Paris Agreement Article 6, as part of the pathway to the 2040 target.

The proposal must now be discussed, possibly amended, and eventually formally adopted by the EU institutions under the ordinary legislative procedure. Initially, the adoption of the proposed amendment was expected by the end of 2025. However, disagreements with the Commission proposal have resulted in hostile positioning and further delays. For example, the Rapporteur on this file in the European Parliament has proposed a rejection of the proposal. Moreover, an important vote in the Council was cancelled in September to give space to higher level discussions among the Heads of State at the end of October. It is now expected that the legislative process will stretch into 2026 or even later, depending on the negotiations.

Once adopted, the new target will trigger a review of many related laws (e.g., emissions trading, effort-sharing, land-use) to ensure all parts of the EU legal "acquis" align with the 2040 goal.

Prior to the publication of the Commission's proposal for the 2040 target, together with other forest-based industry stakeholders, CEI-Bois co-signed a statement, calling for an enabling EU climate policy framework which:

- Duly considers the uncertainty of climate change impacts on forests.
- Does not set short-term uncertain policy targets disconnected from long-term thinking of forest management decisions.
- Aims to deploy the potential of the forest-based bioeconomy.

It also underlined that the European forest-based value chain can and should contribute to the goals of the wider EU climate policy framework. Our sector must be a key part of the new EU Bioeconomy Strategy, promoting competitiveness through sustainably managed forests, covering from short to long-lived forest-based products across the forest-based value chain.

CEI-Bois will continue to monitor the legislative process and the political negotiations around it, keep members informed, and intervene as appropriate.

4.3.10 Roadmap on Nature Credits

In July 2025, the European Commission published the Roadmap towards Nature Credits, launching simultaneously a call for feedback.

The stated goal of this Communication is to incentivise private investments into actions that protect and preserve nature, and to reward those who undertake such actions and invest in them. This could be a company, a financial institution, a public entity or a citizen. The nature-positive actions can be valued and certified by an independent organisation, thus providing credibility to investors sponsoring the action through nature credits. The actions supported by nature credits can take different forms; some examples in the EU include restoring wetlands or extending forest areas. To bridge the funding gap for nature, the Commission is relying on public and private finance. The Communication sets the direction for developing this new financial instrument. Several environmental organisations have expressed scepticism about this Communication, especially as the Commission prepares to unveil the next EU budget.

The establishment of an Expert Group on Nature Credits, including representatives from Member States and stakeholders (farmers, forest managers, businesses, etc.) was also announced for 2025, and a dedicated continuously open call for applications was launched. This group will be responsible for proposing criteria and methodologies for the creation of nature credit markets (by mid-2026) and for developing a governance framework for nature credits by 2027. In September 2025, CEI-Bois applied for membership in the Expert Group on Nature Credits.

Moreover, at the end of September, CEI-Bois provided its feedback on the Roadmap towards Nature Credits. The European wood industries warn that unclear nature credit schemes could restrict raw material access and weaken the sector's competitiveness. They call for a governance model that treats nature credits as a complementary tool to sustainable forest management, supporting both the bioeconomy and Europe's strategic autonomy in renewable resources.

4.3.11 Renewal of IPBC approval

Following up on its preparatory work throughout the year, CEI-Bois submitted in October 2024 its response to the public consultation of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) on the potential classification of IPBC as candidate for substitution in the context of the renewal of its approval.

The CEI-Bois response was prepared based on three analyses of alternatives, two of which conducted by DHI Group and Ramboll, at the request of CEI-Bois Members and other Brussels-based associations such as EuroWindoor.

In its response, CEI-Bois pointed out that the use of IPBC is indispensable for the European woodworking industries and its replacement by biocidal or non-chemical alternatives is not viable now or in the foreseeable future.

ECHA was therefore urged to renew the approval of IPBC for 7 years, without any use case restrictions. This is absolutely necessary for the daily operations of the woodworking industries and to avoid negative impacts on the EU economy and society, including by hampering wood's significant potential to contribute to the EU's climate neutrality targets.

As a result, in March 2025, the Biocidal Products Committee (BPC) of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) adopted a favourable opinion on the renewal of IPBC for product-type 8.

According to the summary of the BPC opinion: "3-iodo-2-propynyl butylcarbamate (IPBC) for product-type 8 IPBC has been evaluated for its use as wood preservative. It is intended to be used as a fungicide against wood-rotting fungi and wood-discolouring fungi (blue stain). The renewal dossier supports the use of IPBC as wood preservative for Use class 2 and 3 for use in water-based and solvent-based formulations for industrial, professional, and non-professional use. Evaluated application methods were automated flow-coating/deluging/spraying, manual dipping, and brushing/rolling. Additional application methods (including automated dipping, manual spraying, and vacuum-pressure impregnation techniques) are approved for authorised biocidal products containing IPBC for use in Use class 2 and 3. The BPC adopted its opinion on the renewal of IPBC for product-type 8 by simple majority. Denmark is the evaluating competent authority of this application."

Moreover, in May 2025, CEI-Bois announced that the European Commission was temporarily extending the expiration date of IPBC on product type 8 uses (i.e., wood preservatives) from 31 July 2025 until 31 July 2026. This in order to provide the Commission with additional time to fully review the proposed application for IPBC's renewal as a wood preservative.

CEI-Bois will continue monitoring the developments in 2026 and take the necessary action to ensure the renewal of IPBC.

4.3.12 Group of Experts on Forest-based Industries and Sectorally Related Issues

In March 2025, CEI-Bois attended online the European Commission's meeting of the Group of Experts on Forest-based Industries and Sectorally Related Issues. The agenda covered key EU policy updates and industry developments affecting the forest-based sector. DG ENV presented progress on the EUDR implementation, including benchmarking and SME guidance.

CEI-Bois intervened, requesting information on the Article 34 impact assessment regarding possible product list expansion. DG ENV confirmed the review is ongoing.

DG GROW then gave updates on the Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA) and its implementation. CEI-Bois asked about Article 29.2 and the listing of net-zero products and components. DG GROW provided clarification.

Further presentations addressed the Biotech and Biomanufacturing Hub, the BIC & RCI study on defossilising the chemical industry, and the Bioeconomy Strategy revision. Discussions focused on resource availability, sustainability criteria, and biomass competition.

Participants also reviewed the Clean Industrial Deal and Competitiveness Compass, emphasising industrial resilience.

The meeting concluded with notice of a joint DG GROW–DG ENV workshop on 5 May 2025.

4.3.13 Expert Group on Forest and Forestry Stakeholder Platform

CEI-Bois participated both in person and online in the April 2025 meeting of the Expert Group on Forest and Forestry Stakeholder Platform. The agenda focused on key EU policy areas: the Bioeconomy, CAP forestry interventions, CBE JU 2025 calls, Nature Restoration Regulation, biodiversity certification and nature credits, and recent workshops on Closer-to-Nature Forest Management and Forest Guidelines in the Boreal Region.

During the Bioeconomy session, CEI-Bois advocated strongly for the inclusion of traditional industries in the forthcoming EU Bioeconomy Strategy, notably the woodworking and construction sectors. CEI-Bois emphasised the role of wood construction in decarbonisation, contributing to climate-neutral objectives and sustainable growth.

We also underlined the synergies with the European Affordable Housing Plan and the importance of green public procurement to drive demand for sustainable wood products.

CEI-Bois furthermore highlighted connections with the New European Bauhaus initiative to promote aesthetic, sustainable, and circular design using bio-based materials.

Finally, CEI-Bois called for policy coherence across EU initiatives to ensure that forest-based industries can fully contribute to the circular and climate-neutral economy. The meeting fostered dialogue among stakeholders from forestry, industry, and environmental sectors, strengthening cross-policy collaboration.

4.4 Wood in construction

4.4.1 European Affordable Housing Plan

The new European Commission announced the adoption of the first-ever European Affordable Housing Plan (EAHP) for the beginning of 2026. This will address the urgent housing crisis facing millions of families and young people across the EU, who are unable to access appropriate housing at an affordable price.

In anticipation of the forthcoming publication of the EAHP, CEI-Bois has sought to obtain timely and reliable information, and to influence policymaking by participating in a wide range of events and initiatives, as outlined below.

4.4.1.1 Market potential of offsite construction for housing supply

In March 2025, CEI-Bois replied to the High Level Construction Forum (HLCF)'s online survey on the market potential of offsite construction for housing supply. The survey was based on research carried out by the HLCF's Technical Secretariat (Research Note on Offsite Construction) and it was addressed mainly to stakeholders familiar with offsite construction.

The CEI-Bois reply aggregated at EU level the various individual and national-level replies of its Construction Working Members.

Among others, the CEI-Bois reply provided the following insights:

- Offsite construction adoption faces financial, regulatory and demand-side barriers, as well as supply-chain and skilled-labour shortages;
- Demand is growing in some EU countries, with Scandinavia, Austria, Germany and Ireland leading due to established timber and offsite practices;
- Offsite solutions are seen as particularly suitable for new residential buildings and can significantly reduce construction time and costs;
- Public procurement incentives, subsidies and visibility of long-term demand are key to market growth;
- Regulatory updates are needed as building codes remain outdated, highly variable across regions, and often ignore factory-manufactured load-bearing systems;
- Timber-focused policies strongly support offsite adoption, given the close link between timber construction and industrialised building;
- R&I should focus on moisture-related performance in mass timber, digital/automation technologies, and new business models across the construction value chain.

4.4.1.2 BPIE Changemakers & Policy Dialogue

In February 2025, CEI-Bois attended the BPIE Changemakers and Policy Dialogue 2025 in the European Parliament, on the key topic of sustainable and affordable buildings for Europe.

Members of the European Parliament and representatives of the European Commission recognised the urgent need for new construction and for a renovation boost in Europe, as well as their role in helping mitigate climate change, resolving the acute housing crisis, alleviating energy poverty, and strengthening the EU's industrial competitiveness.

Indeed, the European Commission (DG ENER) reiterated that buildings are a priority for the new mandate from several angles: affordability, sustainability, competitiveness for industry (particularly for SMEs), and energy costs.

The establishment of the Commission Project Group on Affordable Housing, which had already started its work, was presented as an indication of the new Commission's determination to act on the above. The Housing Task Force intends to bring all the relevant policies together into the European Affordable Housing Plan, which will include a Strategy for Construction.



4.4.1.3 Affordable Housing Dialogue

In March 2025, CEI-Bois was also present in the European Parliament for the official launch of the Affordable Housing Dialogue, a joint initiative of the Commission Project Group on Affordable Housing and the European Parliament's HOUS Special Committee, under the oversight of Commissioner Dan Jørgensen and MEP Irene Tinagli. According to Commissioner Jørgensen, "This event kickstarts 2025 as the year of engagement and outreach."

CEI-Bois has been ready and eager to engage and actively contribute to the European Commission's efforts to deliver sustainable and affordable housing. Increasing both the quantity and quality of housing is essential, and we fully support the Commissioner's remark that the New European Bauhaus should serve as inspiration for sustainability and inclusiveness.

While renovation, retrofitting, and repurposing of existing buildings are useful measures, financing the construction of new housing units is key, unavoidable, and urgently needed, given the current gap in housing supply. Additionally, a sustainable construction wave could revive the competitiveness and productivity of the EU's construction sector.

Ensuring access to quality, sustainable, and affordable housing is key for a stronger, greener, and more inclusive Europe.

4.4.1.4 EC call for evidence and public consultation for the European Affordable Housing Plan

In June 2025, CEI-Bois submitted its contribution to the European Commission call for evidence for the European Affordable Housing Plan (EAHP). Welcoming the initiative, CEI-Bois underlined its potential to bring about a long overdue wave of new affordable and sustainable construction as the main answer to alleviating the EU's housing crisis. To ensure the success of this effort, three overarching principles should guide policymakers in this process:

- The affordability and sustainability of housing must go hand in hand, in line with the EU's existing climate neutrality ambitions;
- Priority should be given to reducing the housing supply gap via new construction;
- Revitalising the construction ecosystem is key, and requires overcoming financial regulatory, and standardisation-related obstacles.

CEI-Bois clearly expressed the desire of the European woodworking industries to contribute to this vision by proposing two solutions to increasing the supply of affordable and sustainable housing:

- Advancing the use of wood in construction;
- Mainstreaming industrialised construction, in particular offsite timber construction.

A copy of this contribution was shared also with DG GROW, in anticipation of the upcoming public consultation on the European Strategy for Housing Construction, where CEI-Bois also intended to submit an official reply. CEI-Bois furthermore shared the document with Members of the European Parliament's Special Committee on the Housing Crisis in the European Union (EP HOUS), as they were preparing an own-initiative report on the Housing crisis in the EU with the aim of proposing solutions for decent, sustainable and affordable housing.

In October, CEI-Bois also replied to the European Commission's public consultation on the EAHP, providing further clarification regarding the contribution that the wood sector could provide to alleviating the housing crisis, the outstanding challenges to the wider adoption of our solutions, as well as the possible remedies to these challenges.



Brussels, 3 June 2025

CEI-Bois contribution to the European Commission's Call for Evidence for the European Affordable Housing Plan

The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois) welcomes the European Commission's endeavour to address the urgent housing crisis by proposing the first-ever **European Affordable Housing Plan** (the Plan). We are particularly excited about the **European Strategy for Housing Construction** (the Strategy), an essential pillar of the Plan, seeking to fill the housing gap by enabling the construction sector to increase the insufficient supply. Finally, we are pleased about the upcoming proposal of a **Construction Services Act**, which will strive to remove any remaining frictions across the Single Market for construction services. The combined potential of these policy initiatives is enormous and, if designed and implemented properly, they could bring about a long overdue **wave of new affordable and sustainable construction** as the main answer to alleviating the EU's housing crisis.

Three overarching principles should guide policymakers in their efforts:

1. The affordability and sustainability of housing must go hand in hand, in line with the EU's existing climate neutrality ambitions;
2. Priority should be given to reducing the housing supply gap via new construction;
3. Revitalising the construction ecosystem is key, and it requires overcoming financial regulatory, and standardisation-related obstacles.

The European woodworking industries wish to contribute to this vision by proposing two solutions to increasing the supply of affordable and sustainable housing in Europe:

- a) **Advancing the use of wood in construction;**
- b) **Mainstreaming industrialised construction, in particular offsite timber construction.**

4.4.1.5 EC Project Group on Affordable Housing

At the end of July, CEI-Bois held an online meeting with the European Commission Project Group on Affordable Housing to discuss the role of timber in addressing Europe's housing and climate challenges.

The conversation began with the Project Group representatives, highlighting the growing interest in factory-built housing thanks to faster construction times and higher quality. They also confirmed that the European Commission will make the link between the housing crisis and the climate crisis through the lens of sustainability and the New European Bauhaus initiative. It was stated that Commissioner Dan Jorgensen's priority is to support vulnerable households spending more than 40% of their income on housing and heating.

However, the Project Group's representatives indicated that the forthcoming European Affordable Action Plan may not go into detail on materials. While there is strong interest in materials, views differ across Member States. CEI-Bois' strong advocacy was nonetheless recognised at EU level.

CEI-Bois stressed that achieving net-zero by 2050 requires decarbonising the built environment, with wood playing a central role by both storing carbon and having low embodied carbon. The potential carbon storage in timber buildings, at much lower cost, was emphasised. The growing evidence that timber buildings are healthier buildings was also highlighted.

The European Commission acknowledged the need for more evidence and data, as institutional knowledge on timber remains limited. CEI-Bois was encouraged to continue sharing information and invited to a follow-up meeting in person in Brussels.

4.4.1.6 CEI-Bois Task Force on EU Affordable Housing

On 5 September, the newly established CEI-Bois Task Force on EU Affordable Housing held its kick-off meeting under the Chairmanship of Mr Kalle Ikonen. It saw a significant participation of CEI-Bois members.

The meeting started with a presentation by the European Commission Project Group on Affordable Housing with insights into the planned adoption of the EAHP and European Strategy for Housing Construction. CEI-Bois members then had the opportunity to exchange views the Commission, share concerns, and propose timber sector solutions to the EU's housing crisis.

The rest of the meeting was dedicated to an open discussion between CEI-Bois members on the past and future advocacy activities of the woodworking industries in relation to the EAHP.

4.4.1.7 Amendment proposals to EP HOUS draft Report on Housing Crisis in the EU

In parallel to the European Commission Project Group on Affordable Housing, the European Parliament established its own Special Committee on the Housing Crisis in the European Union (EP HOUS). As previously mentioned, from inception, EP HOUS started preparing on an own-initiative Report on the Housing crisis in the European Union with the aim of proposing solutions for decent, sustainable and affordable housing.

To inform this Report with the perspective of the timber sector, CEI-Bois submitted its contribution to the European Commission call for evidence for the EAHP. Furthermore, following the publication of the draft Report, CEI-Bois, EOS, and EPF submitted several amendments to Members of European Parliament (MEPs) in the EP HOUS. Moreover, CEI-Bois met with the Report's Shadow Rapporteur from the European Conservatives and Reformists and with the EP HOUS' Vice Chair from the Greens to discuss our sector's envisaged solutions to the housing crisis.

CEI-Bois will continue monitoring the developments around the EP HOUS' Report and engage in further advocacy as necessary.

4.4.1.8 European Strategy for Housing Construction

A key pillar of the EAHP will be the European Strategy for Housing Construction (ESHC), expected to be put forward together with the EAHP latest in the beginning of 2026. The purpose of the strategy is to create framework conditions for increasing the supply of repurposed, renovated, and new housing. This will involve measures aimed at increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the whole construction ecosystem, while serving the diverse needs of the population, especially by ensuring that housing is affordable.

Similar to the EAHP, the European Commission launched a call for evidence for the ESHC, to which CEI-Bois replied by proposing three key recommendations:

- Set in motion a wave of new and sustainable construction in Europe;
- Pick up the pace of the renovation wave without disregarding the importance of new buildings;
- Mainstream industrialised construction in conjunction with circular bio-based materials to respond to the affordability and sustainability imperatives.

CEI-Bois also underlined that, without addressing several critical remaining challenges - financial, regulatory, and standardisation-related – any efforts risk being undermined. To ensure meaningful progress, additional targeted solutions must be adopted, including inter alia:

- Enable access to diverse revenue streams, such as carbon storage credits.
- Improve access to capital and insurance.
- Ensure stable demand through strategic public procurement.
- Undertake deep regulatory simplification and streamlining.
- Harmonise national building codes.
- Simplify and accelerate permitting processes.

- Speed up the update and development of harmonised construction products.
- Allocate resources for the consistent implementation of the second-generation Eurocodes.
- Align standardised methodologies for assessing environmental sustainability with EU policies and legislation.
- Deliver on the European Commission's 2025 priority to advance bio-based standards.

4.4.2 Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (recast)

Following the adoption of the recast Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (recast EPBD), which entered into force in May 2024, we have entered the implementation phase, whereby the directive must be transposed into national legislation by May 2026, and the European Commission must develop secondary legislation such as delegated and implementing acts, as well as guidance documents.

CEI-Bois has proactively sought to contribute to the outcomes of EU-level processes, as shown below.

4.4.2.1 Technical Assistance on Whole Life-Cycle Global Warming Potential (GWP) Reporting for Buildings

CEI-Bois has actively contributed to the Technical Assistance on Whole Life-Cycle Global Warming Potential (GWP) reporting for buildings, an initiative led by DG Energy (DG ENER) and implemented by external consultants Viegand Maagøe on behalf of the European Commission. The project supports the development of a Union-wide methodology for calculating and reporting the life-cycle GWP (LCGWP) of new buildings, in line with the recast EPBD's Article 7.

As a reminder, Article 7 of the recast EPBD empowers the European Commission to adopt delegated acts amending Annex III to establish a Union framework for national LCGWP calculations with a view to achieving climate neutrality. The life-cycle GWP is to be calculated and disclosed:

- from 1 January 2028 for all new buildings with a useful floor area larger than 1 000 m².
- from 1 January 2030 for all new buildings.

The first delegated act must be adopted by 31 December 2025, and by 1 January 2027, Member States are required to publish national roadmaps setting out limit values for total cumulative LCGWP of all new buildings, with progressive targets from 2030 onwards, differentiated by climate zone and building type.

1st Stakeholder Meeting

In October 2024, CEI-Bois participated online in the first stakeholder meeting, which focused on two main objectives:

- Gathering input for the delegated act amending Annex III of the recast EPBD, establishing a Union methodology for calculating the life-cycle GWP (LCGWP) of new buildings;

- Collecting feedback to inform guidance for Member States on developing limit values for LCGWP in new buildings.

A public consultation was launched during the meeting in the form of a questionnaire, covering the main aspects of LCGWP reporting. CEI-Bois submitted its response at the end of October based on preliminary comments shared with the consultants prior to the meeting and based on an internal discussion held within the CEI-Bois Construction working group at the end of September.

2nd Stakeholder Meeting

In February 2025, CEI-Bois and several of its members attended the second stakeholder meeting, led by DG ENER. The meeting provided updates on the delegated act and accompanying guidance, including:

- Progress in defining the Union methodology for LCGWP calculation;
- Preparatory work for Member State roadmaps introducing GWP limit values and progressive reduction targets for new buildings from 2030 onward.

DG ENER shared detailed updates, and informed participants about a structured survey to collect further stakeholder feedback. Following the meeting and based on Members' input, CEI-Bois submitted its formal response to the DG ENER survey.

Follow-up CEI-Bois discussion

The follow-up CEI-Bois Construction working group meeting in March focused on one key technical issue raised during the consultation: the use of generic versus product-specific Life Cycle Inventory (LCI) data when performing Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) and producing construction product Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

Members agreed that:

- High-quality, reliable generic data - representing conservative but not worst-case values - should be accepted by default to ensure accessibility and compliance for manufacturers of all sizes under the recast EPBD and the new Construction Products Regulation (CPR-2024);
- Product-specific data, where available, should be encouraged and used to recognise and reward manufacturers' sustainability investments.

4.4.2.2 EC support package

On 30 June, the European Commission published a package of various documents supporting the recast EPBD's implementation.

Comprising a Delegated Regulation, an Implementing Regulation, and a comprehensive set of Guidance documents, the package offers practical guidance as EU countries look to transpose the directive into national law by May 2026.

Specifically, the following documents have been published:

- Delegated Regulation revising the methodological framework for calculating cost-optimal levels.
- Implementing Regulation establishing common templates for the transfer of information from national databases to the EU Building Stock Observatory.
- Communication approving the content of the Notice providing Guidance on the recast EPBD, including guidance documents on:
 - Minimum energy performance standards for non-residential buildings and trajectories for the progressive renovation of residential buildings (Article 9)
 - Financial incentives, skills and market barriers (Article 17) and one-stop shops (Article 18)
 - Energy performance certificates (Articles 19-21, Annex V) and independent control systems (Article 27, Annex VI)
 - Renovation passport (Article 12, Annex VIII)
 - Databases for the energy performance of buildings (Article 22)
 - Data exchange (Article 16)
 - Zero-emission buildings (Articles 7 and 11)
 - Solar energy in buildings (Article 10)
 - Infrastructure for sustainable mobility (Article 14)
 - Technical building systems, indoor environmental quality and inspections (Articles 13, 23 and 24)
 - Fossil fuel boilers (Article 13, Annex II)
 - Common general framework for the calculation of the energy performance of buildings (Annex I)
 - Life-cycle global warming potential of new buildings (Article 7(2) and (5))

4.4.2.3 EC call for feedback on draft Delegated Act establishing EU framework for calculating global warming potential of new buildings

The work of the Technical Assistance culminated in October 2025, when the European Commission published its draft Delegated Act (DA) establishing an EU framework for calculating global warming potential of new buildings, while simultaneously launching a call for feedback.

While the direction of the draft DA is generally positive, CEI-Bois has identified opportunities for substantial improvement. Based on members' input, it will submit its contribution to the call for feedback, suggesting:

- Recognition of biogenic carbon storage.
- Inclusion of dynamic LCA reporting.
- Ensuring mutual data recognition across the Member States.
- Framework alignment and regulatory coherence.
- Recognition and rewarding of cascading reuse and circularity.

CEI-Bois will continue monitoring the adoption of this DA and intervene with science-based advocacy actions whenever appropriate.

4.4.3 Construction Products Regulation (CPR-2024)

Following its adoption by the EU institutions, the new Construction Products Regulation (CPR-2024) was registered in the Official Journal of the EU (OJEU) on 18 December 2024. It entered into force on 7 January 2025, and it will generally apply from 8 January 2026. Specific articles, however, apply already from 7 January 2025.

Manufacturers in our sector must comply with CPR-2024 as soon as the harmonised technical specifications of the relevant product categories will be updated via the ongoing CPR Acquis process. CEI-Bois will continue monitoring and engaging with the CPR Acquis process, as well as with the expected publication of new Delegated Acts.

The CPR-2024 is now at implementation stage, which is accompanied by several developments, covering a wide range of topics, as outlined below.

4.4.3.1 Feasibility study on an EU database for construction products

In October 2024, CEI-Bois attended an online meeting on the upcoming Feasibility study on an EU database for construction products in the context of the CPR-2024, hosted by DG GROW and a consortium of consultants. The goal of the study was to assess the long-term financial feasibility of establishing an EU database/system for the management of digital product passports (DPPs) of construction products for the European Commission and for manufacturers, particularly by conducting a cost analysis of three possible options:

1. Centralised database developed, maintained, and supported by the European Commission.
2. Decentralised model with DPP service providers, approved by the European Commission on the basis of EU common requirements that will be developed to ensure consistency, security, and user friendliness of the system.
3. Decentralised model with manufacturers' own databases and backup service providers. The manufacturers' system will comply with common requirements to ensure consistency and persistence of data, security and user friendliness for users. In addition, to ensure persistence of data (backup of the DPPs), manufacturers need to send data to third-party backup service providers.

As part of this feasibility study, a public consultation (survey) was also launched, and it was intended for 2 categories of economic operators:

- a) Organisations who will generate and issue DPPs (manufacturers).
- b) Organisations using the DPPs (designers, construction companies, public bodies, etc.).

While the survey was open to aggregate replies from Brussels-based or national associations, it was primarily directed at economic operators and their technical teams in charge of digitalisation. These are asked via the survey to explain how they are working today in this area and what the necessary resources that they currently employ are (financial, time, staff). CEI-Bois members were therefore encouraged to share the survey

as widely as possible within their network, so that companies had the chance to provide direct replies reflecting the realities on the ground.

As a reminder, Article 75 of the CPR-2024 empowers the European Commission to set up via delegated act a construction digital product passport system, which shall be compatible with, interoperable with, and based upon the digital product passport established by the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation. Manufacturers will be obliged to make available their DPPs by 18 months after the entry into force of the delegated act referred above (Article 22).

4.4.3.2 Full-day events organised by Group of Notified Bodies and European Commission

The Group of Notified Bodies (GNB) and the European Commission (DG GROW) hosted two full-day hybrid events on the new Construction Products Regulation on 22 October and 30 October, respectively. CEI-Bois attended both events online.

Anticipating the official adoption of the CPR- 2024, both events addressed the new requirements, in direct engagement with two different audiences. While the GNB event was mainly aimed at Notified Bodies and their representatives, the DG GROW event was directed primarily at economic operators manufacturing and placing construction products on the EU market.

CEI-Bois also informed its members about the DG GROW event, encouraging these to share the invitation within their networks for a wider reach and to facilitate the direct participation of woodworking sector manufacturers.

4.4.3.3 Meetings of the CPR Acquis Subgroup on Structural Timber 1st informal meeting

At the end of November 2024, CEI-Bois attended as Observer the 1st informal meeting of the new CPR Acquis Subgroup on Structural Timber Products/Elements and Ancillaries (STP). During the meeting, the European Commission (DG GROW) presented the subgroup's Work Programme, consisting of 4 milestones to be completed throughout 2025.

As part of Milestone 1, the European Commission asked the representatives of the Member States involved in the work of the STP to fill out a template (table) by providing information regarding:

1. The products that should fall under the scope of this subgroup;
2. The applicable national regulatory requirements (essential characteristics) per product.

CEI-Bois members who are not directly involved in the work of the STP were encouraged to be in close contact with their national authorities and provide these with their industry input. Those CEI-Bois members that, for whatever reason, cannot cooperate with their national authorities on this topic were welcomed to fill out the template and

share it with CEI-Bois by 20 January 2025, so that the secretariat could then submit it to the European Commission on their behalf.

1st official meeting

At the end of June 2025, CEI-Bois and several of its members (in their capacity of representatives of the national governments of the EU Member States) participated in the first official meeting of the STP.

Under the guidance of DG GROW, the participants discussed in detail the list of timber construction product families that should fall under the scope of the CPR-2024, as well as the relevant harmonised standards and European Assessment Documents underpinning these products.

This work forms the so-called Milestone 1 (definition of the scope of the product family). In addition to the need to update outdated standards and establish new ones for the more established timber products, the European Commission also mentioned the possibility to tackle the standardisation of modular elements containing wood, as well that of recovered wood (only if there is a real market need).

The next meeting of the STP is expected to take place in autumn, when additional Milestone 1 comments will be addressed and when a presentation of the preliminary draft on Milestone 3 (preparation of the technical content) is also foreseen.

4.4.3.4 CEI-Bois application and appointment to CPR Acquis subgroups

In March 2025, the European Commission launched the continuously open call for applications for the selection of members to the CPR Acquis Expert Group and its subgroups. Members of the CEI-Bois Construction working group were informed of the secretariat's intention to apply as an official member to the following horizontal subgroups:

- Structural Timber
- Fire Performance
- Dangerous Substances

At that time, CEI-Bois was already an Observer to the Structural Timber subgroup, being represented by Mr Dieter Lechner and Mr Claudiu Sonda. These two were therefore proposed again as official representatives. CEI-Bois was nevertheless still looking for two additional volunteers with technical expertise in the areas of Fire and Dangerous Substances. Dr Gregor Pfeifer, Chair of the CEI-Bois VOC Task Force, volunteered to take on the responsibility regarding Dangerous Substances.

In July, CEI-Bois announced that it had been officially appointed as a full Member of the Structural Timber subgroup, marking a significant step forward in our engagement. Applications to join the Fire Performance and Dangerous Substances subgroups are still under assessment by the European Commission. Updates will follow as we receive more information.

4.4.3.5 Letter to DG GROW on plans to establish European Class System

In March 2025, CEI-Bois co-signed, alongside the European Panel Federation (EPF) and other relevant wood industry associations, a confidential letter addressed to DG GROW on its questionable plans to establish a European Class System for Indoor Air Emissions.

It was underlined that any classification for dangerous substances must be materially neutral, be backed by strong scientific evidence, and not unfairly disadvantage nature-based products. The letter pointed out that TVOC and sum values are not suitable for health-related assessment of indoor air quality or products. It also insisted that formaldehyde is taken out of the VOC and class system debate and is dealt with separately according to REACH only.

CEI-Bois and the other co-signatories expressed their interest to cooperate further with DG GROW on developing scientifically and economically sound regulations.

4.4.4 Other construction-related initiatives & events

4.4.4.1 JRC study “Capturing the Potential of the Circular Economy Transition in Energy-Intensive Industries”

At the start of October 2025, CEI-Bois noted the publication of a new study by the Joint Research Centre (JRC), titled “Capturing the Potential of the Circular Economy Transition in Energy-Intensive Industries”. The chapter on cement and concrete contains several negative statements about the substitution potential of using timber in construction, with significant implication for the woodworking sector.

Particularly concerning was the following statement: “A frequently proposed lever, namely increased use of wood instead of concrete, has shown to have mainly negative effects on the environmental impacts, but was included nevertheless for transparency. Even at a low substitution rate of 10%, it shows impacts that are 1.5–3 Mt CO₂-eq. above the baseline scenario values. A similar trend is detected for Land Use, as forestry services needed for construction are increased by 17%. This is related to the higher volume of wood necessary to replace structural concrete.”

The CEI-Bois Construction Working Group convened on 27 October 2025 to:

- Reflect collectively on the JRC findings.
- Exchange perspectives on their potential impact on the timber value chain.
- Consider how the sector should respond to the narrative emerging from the study.

Participants agreed that further clarity is needed on the assumptions, methodology and calculations underpinning the report’s conclusions. As a next step, it has been decided to invite the study’s coordinator to a Construction working group meeting, to engage directly and ensure a better understanding of the approach taken by the JRC.

4.4.4.2 High-Level Forum Construction

CEI-Bois attended the 5th annual meeting of the High-Level Construction Forum, which took place in a hybrid format (Brussels and online) on 25 March 2025.

The full-day event was structured in three parts:

- Part 1: Towards a competitive, sustainable and productive construction ecosystem.
- Part 2: Joining forces to modernise construction.
- Part 3: Making it happen – new EU priorities for construction.

During Part 3, participants joined focused discussions on three priority topics for the European Commission:

- Improving markets for secondary construction materials
- Accelerating building permits
- Services and skilled labour

These discussions were expected to feed directly into the development of the forthcoming European Strategy for Housing Construction, intended to support housing supply under the European Affordable Housing Plan.

CEI-Bois was represented and contributed to the interactive workshop on “Improving markets for secondary construction materials”, relaying input and priorities from the woodworking sector.

4.4.4.3 Construction Product Europe

Furthermore, in October, CEI-Bois attended online the CPE Workshop on Digital Construction, which was held in hybrid format, and to which some CEI-Bois Members attended in person. The main topic under discussion was the digitalisation of the construction sector, in particular the future roll-out of the Digital Products Passport (DPP) under the CPR-2024. Possibly the most important session of the workshop was the presentation on the DPP by DG GROW. They recalled the legal provisions behind the DPP, the envisaged timeline of the roll-out, and the responsibilities that will fall on the economic operators. Other presentations covered topics related mainly to platforms and tools facilitating the exchange of information in the construction ecosystem at national and European level.

Also in October, CEI-Bois attended CPE's webinar on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). The event was mainly an information session during which:

- Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE) gave an overview of EPR in general and shared examples of already existing EPR schemes in the construction sector;
- Aggregates Europe (AE) shared insights into its experience so far with the ongoing development of EU-wide end of waste criteria (EoW) for its construction and demolition waste.

This was followed by a brief exchange, where some participants expressed:

- Doubts about the ability of construction products manufacturers to engage in individual take-back schemes (given the long life of their products in buildings);
- Concerns about the expected construction cost increases, with negative implications for housing affordability.

Given the importance of these topics (EPR and EoW), particularly in the context of the Circular Economy Act, CEI-Bois members were encouraged to continue reflecting on them in view of further discussions during future meetings of our Construction and Sustainability working groups.

4.5 Social Affairs

4.5.1 Work Programme for the European Sectoral Social Dialogue of the Woodworking Industries

The social partners, the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) and the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois) believe in the importance of a strong and autonomous European social dialogue for the woodworking sectors for a sustainable and prospering woodworking industry. The social partners have agreed to continue to strengthen their collaboration to sustain this.

On the European level and in the framework of their joint initiatives, EFBWW and CEI-Bois consider the repartition of responsibilities between the European and National level and respect the role and autonomy of the national social partners in determining their labour market and terms and conditions of employment by themselves.



This working programme serves as a guideline for the activities of the European social partners of the woodworking sectors for the years 2024-2029. This working programme constitutes a non-exhaustive framework for possible topics of interest between EFBWW and CEI-Bois and may, according to the developments in the EU agenda be updated to better fit the needs of the woodworking industries.

The twin transition - towards a just and fair European industrial policy and attractive industry

The pathways to green and digital transitions are not predetermined, and the twin transition can affect workers and companies both positively and negatively. How we shape the digital and green transitions depends to a great extent on inclusive and well-thought-out policy-making and the social dialogue.

The European Green Deal together with the new European industrial strategy will have an important impact on our industries. Wood will play a vital role as raw material for the European circular and bioeconomy as well as a source for renewable energy. The EU attributes to wood an outstanding function in construction (New European Bauhaus Initiative). The Green Deal has initiated a huge number of initiatives, strategies and legal texts which have been issued by different Commission's departments (DG's) impacting the woodworking industries. However, the overall future impact will be difficult to measure and to be foreseen. This creates an atmosphere of uncertainty and unpredictability for companies and employees. The coming years will be marked by the national implementation processes and first experiences for companies, employees, and the economy.

The green transition is accompanied by the digital transformation which is, compared to other related sectors such as construction, more and more entering the sector with automation, robotisation and prefabrication. However, the potentials of new technologies are not fully explored, and new ones are expected to emerge. The social partners agree that there are opportunities for the sector (e.g. efficiency, productivity) and for the employees (e.g. improved working conditions, less heavy loads) but also challenges such as intensification of work, increased work complexity which can lead to psycho social risks and more monotonous work.

The twin transition represents, on the one hand, a significant opportunity for the woodworking sectors regarding the creation of new jobs and new professions due to new market opportunities, new technologies, etc. On the other hand, they will also have an impact on the organisation and content of work (automation, robotisation, Artificial Intelligence, etc.) and on working conditions (requirements for new skills, new health and safety risks, etc.) as well as on green sustainability and efficiency of companies.

Both, opportunities and challenges can exacerbate the labour shortage in the industry. Therefore, it is important to improve the attractiveness of the woodworking and forestry sector by offering quality employment with fair and decent work conditions and foster a level playing field for companies.

EFBWW and CEI-Bois are committed to continue to address these issues in the framework of their joint activities and to reflect the voice of workers and companies more closely in the debate on a strengthened competitiveness and attractiveness of the forestry and woodworking sectors at national, European, and international level. In addition, the social partners will resume the promoting of use of wood in construction within the

European wood-based sector Wood4Bauhaus Alliance of which both social partners are members. Concerning this latter aspect, the social dialogue will also promote the further research in new applications and properties of wood, making it usable for an even broader use.

Training & Education and Skills

The twin transition will require workers and companies to adapt to new skills needs and job profiles. The CEDEFOP European Skills Index forecasts that implementing the European Green Deal is to bring 2.5 million extra jobs to Europe's economies by 2030. However, this data is general and not giving an insight into sectoral needs of new skills and professions. Skills intelligence and long and short term skills needs analysis is important. Social partners on sectoral but also on company level are best placed to understanding what those jobs look like and how we can educate, train and upskill people to access them.

These challenges can also turn into opportunities for the sector. New professions, rising qualification requirements within occupations, new skills sets, upskilling in connection with progressive forms of work organisations can, together with fair, decent and healthy working conditions, lead to higher attractiveness of the woodworking sector. The demographic change and in particular the ageing of the population and the workforce, combined with the difficulties observed in several Member States to attract and maintain young people in the woodworking sectors, remain a challenge, both for companies and for workers.

EFBWW and CEI-Bois will address the impact of the twin transition on employment with special focus on skills intelligence, skills development and professional education. The social partners will raise awareness among their members on the topic to improve their engagement and commitment on sectoral and national level. Joint recommendations will be developed, and best-case examples will be shared.

Health & Safety

Despite the overall reduction in the number of work-related accidents, improving health and safety in the workplace continues to be an important field of action for the woodworking sectors. More attention towards the problem of occupational diseases is especially requested.

The social partners of the woodworking sector share the commitment to policy and practices for healthy and safe workplaces.

The green and digital transition will change tasks and working processes, will introduce new materials, substances and technologies, all this can improve health and safety at workplaces but can equally lead to new hazards. The speed at which the green economy is expected to expand could lead to skills gaps, with inexperienced workers involved in processes that they have not been trained for. The EU Strategic Framework on occu-

pational safety and health (OSH) for 2021-2027 is a framework to limit occupational hazards in Europe but needs to be operationalised and transformed into specific action and initiatives also on sectorial level. However, the role of social partners is crucial to develop new health and safety measures.

CEI-Bois and EFBWW are committed to raise awareness among their members about anticipation of new emerging OSH risks. But to the same extend, the social partners will be engaged in promoting the improvement of existing OSH measures and address the problem of occupational diseases. The social partners will exchange good practises and develop recommendations for their member organisations.

Strengthening industrial relations

Performing industrial relations are a major element of a level playing field for economic activities. Shaping working conditions in all its aspects by joint agreements is a cornerstone in this respect and the best guarantee to avoid and to fight competition by wage dumping or other kind of dumping related to working conditions.

EFBWW and CEI-Bois support the strengthening of autonomous industrial relations within the woodworking sectors. They also reaffirm the primary responsibility of the national sectoral social partners, through autonomous industrial relations, for finding a common understanding about the organisation of their national labour market.

Recognising the different traditions and structures of industrial relations in Europe the European Social Dialogue aims at supporting and fostering the industrial relations at national levels. To this end EFBWW and CEI-Bois consider also European agreements and guidance as useful and build our activities on the Open Method of Coordination.

4.5.2 Union of Skills

On 5 March, the European Commission officially presented the "Union of Skills", an overarching strategy inspired by the Draghi and Letta reports. This initiative aims to support the development of the Union's human capital and strengthen EU competitiveness. This key initiative of the first 100 days of the European Commission intends to:

1. **Build skills for quality lives and jobs:** through i.a. a Basic Skills Support Scheme, a STEM education strategic plan and a new EU Vocational Education and Training (VET) Strategy.
2. **Provide regular upskilling and reskilling:** through i.a. the use of micro-credentials, a reinforcement of the Pact for Skills and a Skills Guarantee.
3. **Help the free movement of workers:** through i.a. a Skills portability initiative, working towards a European degree, a new European VET diploma.
4. **Attract, develop, and retain talent:** through i.a. the EU Talent Pool, a Visa Strategy to make it easier for top students, skilled workers, and researchers to come to the EU and a 'Choose Europe'.

To enable delivering, the Union of Skills intends to build on a strong structure and governance aligned to the new steering mechanism for competitiveness as outlined in the Competitiveness Compass.

The Union of Skills will:

- be informed by a **European Skills Intelligence Observatory**, providing the necessary data for a well-informed policy. The observatory will provide data and foresight regarding skills and allow for early warning alerts regarding skills shortages in critical or strategic sectors.
- bring together business leaders, education and training providers and social partners, in a **European Skills High-Level Board**, to provide comprehensive insights on skills to the EU policymakers. Building on the Observatory, the Board will ensure a coordinated vision and the identification of the action necessary to strengthen the EU human capital.

This European Skills High-Level Board presents a significant opportunity to engage directly in shaping EU skills policy, share insights on sectoral needs, and contribute to the development of a workforce aligned with the future demands of the woodworking industries. Active participation could help ensure that vocational and technical skills, as well as the sector's competitiveness and innovation capacity, are fully reflected in EU initiatives.

4.5.3 Quality Jobs Roadmap

On 16 April, CEI-Bois attended the official kick-off meeting of the EU Quality Jobs Roadmap hosted by executive Vice-President Roxana Minzatu. Cross-industry and sectoral social partners discussed how to shape this important initiative, which is set to be adopted by the end of 2025.



The Quality Jobs Roadmap will take the form of a Commission communication and aims to define, promote, and maintain quality jobs across the EU, a concept that will influence future employment, skills, and social policies.

The initiative is rooted in the EU's broader agenda for competitiveness, inclusion and a just transition. The strategy is especially in line with:

- The **Competitiveness Compass**, which highlights the importance of promoting quality jobs and skills.
- The **Union of Skills**, which calls for making it easier for employers (particularly SMEs) to find people with the skills they need.
- The **Pact for European Social Dialogue**, which strengthens the role of social partners in shaping labour market, employment, and social policies.

Following the kick-off meeting, CEI-Bois actively contributed to the consultation on the Quality Jobs Roadmap. Our response highlighted that quality jobs are created by competitive, forward-looking companies that enable individuals to thrive, and that the concept of quality work cannot be reduced to a single definition or applied uniformly across all sectors, occupations, and national labour markets.

We stressed the importance of avoiding narratives that stigmatise certain professions and called for a focus on the people performing the work, as well as the companies that provide it, rather than solely on the jobs themselves. In this context, vocational education and training (VET) was emphasised as critical for both the attractiveness of our sector and the sustainability of the European workforce.

Our contribution outlined four interlinked priorities for the Roadmap:

1. **Competitiveness as the foundation of quality jobs:** sustainable employment depends on a supportive business environment, predictable regulation, and access to skilled labour.
2. **Smart regulation and administrative simplification:** EU policies should avoid adding unnecessary burdens, particularly for SMEs, and focus on flexibility and subsidiarity.
3. **Skills, education, and innovation:** high-quality, demand-driven education and training systems are essential for creating and filling quality jobs, while the image and attractiveness of technical and manual professions must be improved.
4. **Voluntary, meaningful social dialogue:** sector-specific dialogue should remain flexible, respecting the autonomy of social partners and avoiding mandatory coverage targets.

Finally, CEI-Bois highlighted the need to improve the public image and attractiveness of the sector, encouraging EU support for campaigns, funding initiatives, and industry-led efforts to modernise perceptions and strengthen skills pathways.

In conclusion, the Roadmap should aim to respect sectoral diversity, support competitiveness, invest in education and skills, enable voluntary dialogue, and uphold the dignity of all forms of work, while focusing on empowering individuals and companies to succeed in a rapidly evolving economy.

4.5.4 Gender Equality Strategy

In June 2025, the EC was organising a targeted consultation on the Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030 to gather the views of European social partners. In line with President von der Leyen's Political Guidelines for 2024-2029, the strategy will a.o. look at the challenges facing women in the labour market, such as equal pay and economic empowerment, work life balance and care, equal employment opportunities and adequate working conditions, etc.

CEI-Bois submitted its contribution in mid-July, underlining that the sector, which remains traditionally male-dominated, faces structural challenges such as occupational segregation, persistent perceptions of the sector as physically demanding and male-oriented, and societal barriers that affect women's availability for full-time work.

To advance gender equality, CEI-Bois highlighted two key priorities. First, workplaces should be welcoming and accessible to all, with practical measures to promote inclusive cultures, address unconscious bias, and ensure appropriate facilities and equipment. Second, achieving long-term gender balance requires fostering quality and inclusive education, including vocational education and training (VET) and STEM pathways, and providing flexible, modular learning opportunities to support a broader and more diverse workforce.

CEI-Bois recommended a set of practical measures to implement these priorities, focusing on collaboration and support rather than additional regulatory or financial burdens. These include raising the sector's profile and promoting female role models, enhancing guidance and outreach in schools, strengthening inclusive VET systems and mobility opportunities, providing practical tools for companies to foster inclusive workplaces, and supporting societal policies that enable work-life balance, such as affordable child-care and shared parental leave. Cultural and behavioural change should be encouraged through sector initiatives, peer learning, and recognition of best practices.

In conclusion, CEI-Bois stressed that partnership-based, proportionate, and pragmatic approaches are essential to advance gender equality. By working together with education providers, public authorities, and social partners, the woodworking industries can contribute to a more diverse, resilient, and future-oriented workforce, strengthening both sectoral innovation and Europe's broader economic and social objectives.

4.5.5 Fair telework and right to disconnect

In the summer of 2025, the European Commission launched the second-phase consultation on workers' right to disconnect and telework, following the first-stage consultation in 2024. The aim of this second phase was to analyse the results of the initial consultation, deepen the discussion on challenges, and explore the potential added value of EU-level action. CEI-Bois submitted its contribution in September, providing detailed feedback on the consultation questions and reinforcing positions already communicated during the first phase.

CEI-Bois highlighted the positive aspects of telework, which provide employees with benefits such as reduced commuting time, lower childcare or eldercare costs, improved work-life balance, and environmental advantages. At the same time, we stressed that overly complex or prescriptive EU regulations could discourage employers from offering telework. Telework should remain flexible and voluntary, reflecting the operational needs of companies and the preferences of employees.

CEI-Bois underlined that existing EU legislation already provides robust protections, including the Working Time Directive, which encompasses the right to disconnect. Employees are therefore safeguarded against being required to work outside agreed hours, and no additional binding legislation is necessary. The cultural and organisational aspects of telework, such as preventing isolation, avoiding work intensification, and balancing operational needs, cannot be resolved by legislation alone, and are better addressed through national frameworks, collective agreements, and organisational policies.

Regarding telework conditions, CEI-Bois emphasised that transparency in telework arrangements, access to appropriate equipment, occupational safety and health, and data protection are already sufficiently covered by national law, EU directives, and existing company policies. Guidance and sharing of good practices are welcomed, but prescriptive or binding EU measures would create disproportionate burdens, especially for SMEs.

CEI-Bois also reaffirmed that the European cross-sectoral framework agreement on telework must be respected and not overridden by new legislation. Any EU action should support social partners' autonomy and collective agreements, allowing flexibility to adapt, complement, or differ from general rules while maintaining the overall protection of workers.

In conclusion, CEI-Bois stressed that telework should be considered an opportunity rather than a right, and participation should be voluntary for both employers and employees. The right to disconnect already exists in law and practice and does not require formalisation in a directive. The focus should instead be on fostering a cultural shift and supporting companies and employees in implementing telework in a practical, flexible, and sector-sensitive manner, ensuring that telework remains a sustainable and beneficial option across the woodworking industries.

4.5.6 European Pillar of Social Rights

In 2025, the European Commission launched a consultation on the development of a new Action Plan for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. This new plan, included in the Commission Work Programme for 2025, builds on the achievements and lessons learned from the 2021 Action Plan and seeks to further strengthen employment, skills, and social rights across the EU. CEI-Bois submitted its contribution in August, drawing on input from its members and insights from initiatives such as the Resilientwood project.

CEI-Bois welcomed the objectives of the Action Plan, which aim to make Europe more competitive, resilient, and inclusive, while investing in people's skills and promoting social rights. We emphasised the importance of a balanced approach that creates opportunities for both workers and employers, supports the development of skills, and avoids unnecessary regulatory burdens that could undermine job creation. The woodworking sector, as a significant employer with strong links to sustainability, bioeconomy, rural development, and the green transition, stands to benefit from measures that stimulate employment and support a skilled workforce.

Reflecting on the 2021 Action Plan, CEI-Bois noted that its targets for 2030, particularly those on employment rates and workforce skills, remain highly relevant. Moving forward, the focus should be on measures that deliver clear, measurable results, particularly in the areas of upskilling and reskilling.

CEI-Bois stressed that policy measures must effectively stimulate labour demand, rather than imposing additional obligations on employers, which can discourage job creation. While the Quality Jobs Roadmap is a useful instrument, it should avoid creating distinctions between "good" and "lesser" jobs that could inadvertently stigmatise certain professions or sectors. Similarly, the New Pact for European Social Dialogue, digitalisation initiatives, and upcoming equality strategies should be implemented in ways that support employers without introducing unnecessary administrative or regulatory burdens.

Finally, CEI-Bois highlighted the importance of simplification. The new Action Plan should streamline processes and clarify existing rules to reduce administrative and financial burdens on companies. By creating conditions that enhance labour demand, workers ultimately benefit through more secure employment, improved working conditions, and better career prospects.

In conclusion, CEI-Bois called for a New Action Plan that focuses on measures that

- Genuinely increase employment rates.
- Supports measurable and impactful upskilling and reskilling initiatives.
- Integrates simplification measures that benefit both workers and enterprises, thereby combining social progress with competitiveness and growth.

4.5.7 European Employers Network

CEI-Bois is a member of the European Employers Network (EEN) since re-joining in 2021. The EEN is a voluntary forum/network where all events are coordinated by Business Europe. It provides a forum in which exchanges of views and information on social policy can take place between European employers' organisations in a timely manner and promote the convergence of views and positions on social policy expressed by European employers' organisations on behalf of their affiliates, in order to enhance their ability to make strong representations to the EU Institutions, European Trade Unions and other relevant European stakeholders.

4.6 Trade

4.6.1 US Tariffs

Following a Proclamation of President Trump at the end of September, US tariffs on the importation of many wood products have entered into force on 14 October 2025. Duty rates on imports of sawn softwood (and softwood logs) from the EU (and some other countries) are set at 10%.

For all other products exported from the EU the tariff rate is 15%.

Other interesting elements in the proclamation are reported below:

- The Proclamation imposes a 25% global tariff on certain upholstered furniture, which will increase to 30% on January 1, 2026.
- The Proclamation imposes a 25% global tariff on kitchen cabinets and vanities, which will increase to 50% on January 1, 2026.
- Trading partners who negotiate with the United States to address the threat of wood imports to the national security of the United States may be able to secure an alternative to the pending tariff increases.
- The Section 232 tariff on subject wood imports from the United Kingdom will not exceed 10% and Japan will not exceed 15%.

4.6.2 EU imports of alleged Russian birch plywood

Prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the global birch plywood production landscape was dominated by Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, collectively accounting for approximately 80% of the world's birch plywood output. In the year 2021, Russia alone exported roughly 1.3 million cubic meters of birch plywood to Europe and an additional 0.6 million cubic meters to North America.

However, the situation took a significant turn with the implementation of the fifth round of sanctions against Russia by the European Union in July 2022. These sanctions effectively prohibited the importation of roundwood and wood products, including birch plywood, from Russia into the EU. Nonetheless, it has come to light, through market data and statistics, that illegal Russian birch plywood continues to find its way into Europe via third-party nations.

This illicit birch plywood influx is evident in the heightened importation of birch plywood from countries like Kazakhstan and Turkey. When examining Kazakhstan's production capacity, it becomes evident that the nation lacks the means to legitimately supply the volumes indicated in the statistics.

The illegal imports of Russian birch plywood utilises various methods to circumvent the EU import ban. One tactic involves routing the plywood through a third country to evade the ban effectively. Furthermore, some third-party countries may make superficial

alterations to the plywood, subsequently claiming the altered country as the product's place of origin. Another stratagem entails manipulating the tariff classification to exempt the product from sanctions.

The unlawful import of Russian birch plywood not only contravenes EU sanctions and the anti-dumping duties imposed on birch plywood imports in 2021 but also violates the EU Timber Regulation and the protocols of international certification organisations. This is particularly relevant if attempts are made to market birch plywood as a certified product.

The evasion of sanctions and the introduction of illegal birch plywood into the market inflict substantial damage upon the European plywood industry and other lawful entities in the value chain. Such illicit products, being cheaper, undermine fair competition, placing European producers at a disadvantage. This comes at a time when these producers are already grappling with elevated energy costs and resource scarcities due to a prior export ban imposed by Russia on birch logs and veneer.

The European woodworking industry stands behind the EU sanction regimes and in support of enforcement, stopping of illegal imports and preventing unfair competition throughout the entire value chain.

Within the framework of its Trade WG, CEI-Bois shares the latest information and developments on the sanction regimes, in full compliance with the existing competition law and rules. CEI-Bois does its best to inform and alert its members on possible sanction circumvention methods that could be used and strongly encourages its members to contact their national competent authorities in the case, where they or their member companies receive any dubious offers.

Following a number of alerts, on 22 August 2023, the EU Commission has ordered the opening of an investigation into suspected imports of birch plywood originating in Russia by imports consigned from Turkey and Kazakhstan. All imports of Birch Plywood crossing the EU border and having a declared country of origin of either Turkey or Kazakhstan require additional registration as part of the customs declaration process. In May 2024, the Commission has officially extended anti-dumping measures on imports of birch plywood from Russia to imports from Kazakhstan and Turkey. The extension follows an investigation which concluded that EU anti-dumping duties on imports of birch plywood from Russia were being circumvented by imports transhipped from Russia to Kazakhstan and Turkey, or sent for final completion to these countries, preceding shipment of the finished product to the EU.

The extension of anti-dumping duties to Kazakhstan and Turkey is necessary to protect EU producers from unfair competition and to enforce trade defence measures in place since November 2021. It concerns imports suspected to be of Russian origin, but with declared Turkish or Kazakh origin.

As of 2025, imports from Kazakhstan sharply reduced, but a concerning surge in imports from Georgia has been observed.

4.6.3 Japanese Agricultural Standard review

The European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS) was the convenor of a Working Group which tackled the issue of the Japanese Agricultural Standard (JAS) 600 review. JAS standards are reviewed every 5 years as a legal requirement under the JAS law. The European industry was requested to collect and submit to Japan the strength data for European spruce to still be JAS certified.



The core part of the project lasted more than a year with many stakeholders (European industry, Japanese authorities, European Commission, wood products inspections and certification agencies, across three continents - North America, Asia, Europe) involved. The project reached its targets and exports of sawn European spruce can continue to be JAS certified.

4.6.4 Anti-dumping proceeding concerning imports of multilayered wood flooring originating in China

In May 2024, the European Commission has initiated an anti-dumping proceeding concerning imports of multilayered wood flooring originating in China.

On July 14, 2025, the European Commission, confirmed that definitive anti-dumping duties are imposed on multilayered wood flooring from China. The definitive anti-dumping duty rates, expressed on the CIF Union border price, customs duty unpaid, should be as follows:

Country	Company	Definitive anti-dumping duty (%)
China	Forest group	32,1
China	Fusong group	36,1
China	JINFA group	21,3
China	Other cooperating companies	28,0
China	All other companies originating in the PRC	36,1

Duties are to be collected retroactively with the following logic: *A definitive anti-dumping duty should therefore be levied on the product concerned, which was made subject to registration by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2733. The level of the duty to be collected retroactively should be set at the level of the provisional duties imposed under Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/78, to the extent that they are lower than the level of the definitive duties imposed under the present Regulation. Where the definitive duty is lower than the provisional duty, the duty shall be recalculated in order to collect the lower amount.*

The product in question is assembled flooring panels, multilayer, of wood, currently falling under CN code 4418 75 00. Panels of bamboo or with at least the top layer (wear layer) of bamboo, and panels for mosaic floors are excluded.

4.6.5 Anti-dumping investigation into Chinese hardwood plywood imports

In October 2024, the EU has launched an anti-dumping investigation into Chinese hardwood plywood imports. Specifically, the product subject to this investigation is plywood consisting solely of sheets of wood other than bamboo and okoumé, each ply not exceeding 6 mm thickness, with at least one outer ply of tropical wood or non-coniferous wood, of species specified under subheadings 4412 31, 4412 33 and 4412 34, whether or not coated or surface covered.

There has been a surge in cheap hardwood plywood coming from China, much of which it is believed to originate from Russia.

On 6 June, the Commission has confirmed the introduction of provisional duties.

The rates of the provisional anti-dumping duty expressed on the CIF Union border price, customs duty unpaid, is as follows:

- For the company: Pizhou Jiangshan Wood Co., Ltd: 25.1%
- All other imports originating in the PRC: 62.4%

In view of the findings at provisional stage, the registration of imports should be discontinued. No decision on a possible retroactive application of anti-dumping measures has been taken at this stage of the proceeding. Definitive measures will be published in December 2025.

As of October 2025, it looks like that definitive rates on Chinese hardwood plywood will actually increase: Pizhou producers have increased from 25.1% to 43.2%, while other Chinese producers will face tariffs of 86.8%.

4.6.6 Anti-dumping investigation into Brazilian softwood plywood imports

On 6 March 2025, the European Commission has published a notice of initiation of an anti-dumping proceeding concerning imports of softwood plywood originating in Brazil (CN 441239).

The Complaint is submitted by EU producers of softwood plywood, collectively called the Softwood Plywood Consortium. The Complainants account for well above 25% of the total production in the EU of softwood plywood. Brazil is the fourth largest global manufacturer of coniferous plywood as well as the largest exporter, accounting for 27% of the global volume of exports and 4% of global production shares in 2021.

The European Commission has published a document (the so-called pre-disclosure) which provides information on the planned imposition of provisional duties in the anti-dumping proceeding concerning imports of softwood plywood originating in Brazil (CN 441239).

With the exception of one company, it is proposed that softwood plywood from all other exporting Brazilian companies will be subject to a 6.2% antidumping duty.

The Commission will impose definitive measures at the beginning of May 2026.

4.7 Research, Development and Innovation

The Forest-based Sector Technology Platform (FTP) is a European Technology Platform (ETP) dedicated to the forest-based sector.

FTP mobilises a broad range of EU-wide actors and developed and disseminated joint visions and strategic R&I agenda for action at EU and national level.

One of the main benefits of FTP is its ability to provide wide, objective, coherent and strategic R&I advice that replaces reliance on multiple, often competing and contradictory, interactions.

In this way, FTP delivers sound, scientific, strategic and EU-relevant information to public funding providers, thus facilitating opportunities for targeted investments in research, technological developments and innovation (RTDI).

FTP was founded in 2005 by four forest-based sector associations: CEI-Bois, CEPI, CEPF and EUSTAFOR.

4.7.1 FTP Database

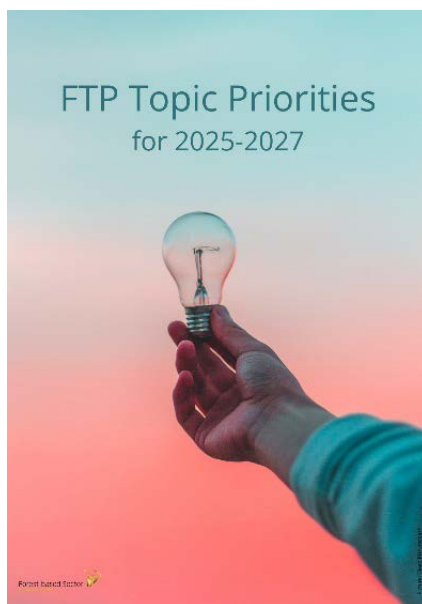
The FTP database is a comprehensive open-source data infrastructure that compiles ongoing and concluded research and innovation activities carried out within the European forest-based sector, as well as providing details of relevant funding opportunities.

Recently updated, with a more user-friendly interface, it was designed to support the implementation of FTP's Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. The database collects information on forest-based sector-related research and innovation projects, calls for proposals, research consortia, funding agencies as well as publications and patents. Embodied with a powerful search engine and multiple filters, the tool makes it possible to consult the details of a single project, create customised searches and save reports that provide strategic information about progress within the sector in addressing its RTD&I priorities.

4.7.2 In the spotlight

Work started on the next edition of the European Research & Innovation Agenda of the forest-based sector

The FTP Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda 2030 have contributed to the definition of the crucial R&I priorities, including those under the EU and national Framework Programmes. It is crucial for success that the forest-based industries speak with one voice when it comes to matters related to research and innovation. In preparation for the next EU Framework Budget to be launched in 2028, FTP has now started the work on the 4th edition of the SIRA, SIRA 2040. In the five-person strong SIRA editing team, Mr Paul Brannen is representing the woodworking industries. Furthermore, the CEI-Bois R&I WG will be involved to further improve the document.



One of the main benefits of the FTP SIRA is that the stakeholders of the forest-based value-chain have access to a common reference that gives an objective, coherent and strategic input to the EU. SIRA 2040 of the forest-based sector will be launched in 2027.

EU Funding to R&I in the woodworking industries

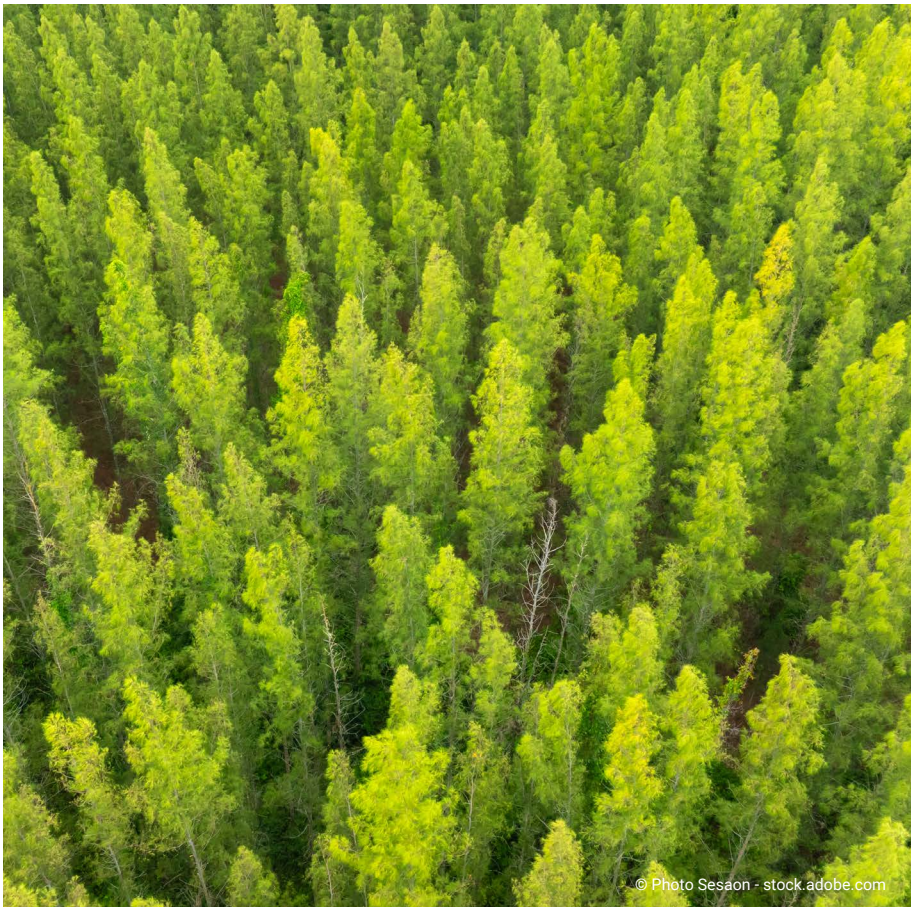
According to the latest FTP statistics, the EU Research Funding contributed with 60M€ to the woodworking industries in 2023.

The funding is offered to collaborative projects such as CISUFLO (circular, sustainable floor coverings) and Bio4EEB (Bio insulation materials for enhancing the energy performance of buildings). These projects have been financed under schemes to which FTP has provided advice and input.

Update on the European Partnership on Forests and Forestry (in preparation)

The European Commission, together with several national research funding agencies, are preparing for the setting up of a 300M€ Partnership related to the forest-based sector. The Partnership is supposed to be established in 2026, with a start of funding activities in early 2027. The focus will be on forests and forestry, but also forest-based products will be part of the scope. In the preparation process, FTP has represented the industry stakeholders.

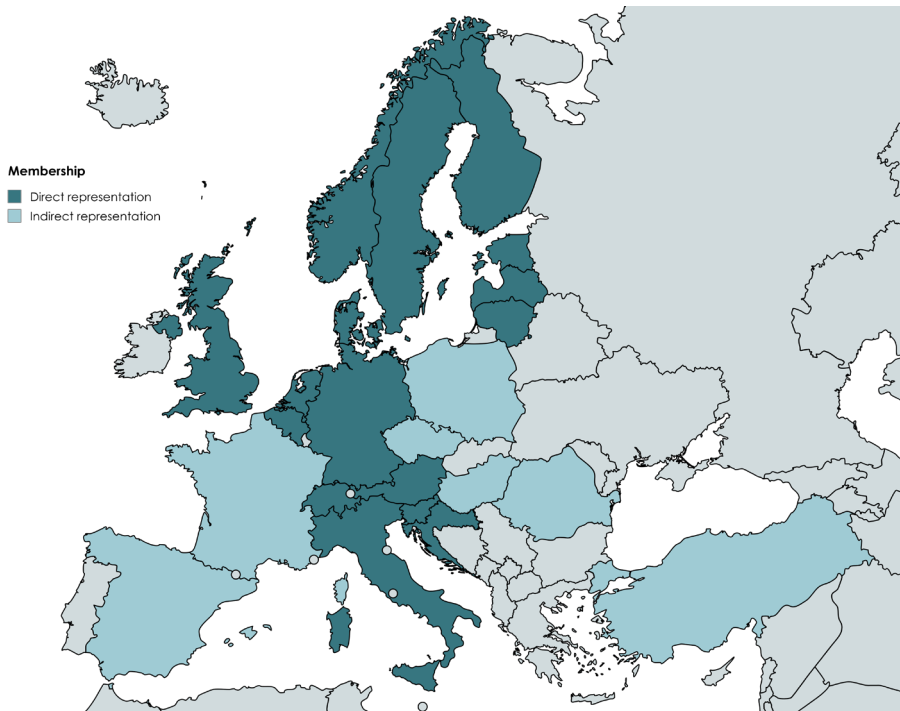
It is our hope, that through the involvement of FTP, the Partnership initiative will be more attentive to the needs of the woodworking industry.





5

5 CEI-Bois members



The next new CEI-Bois member might be you!

*Get in contact with the CEI-Bois secretariat
to learn more about our Confederation
and how to become a member!*

5.1 National Organisations

AUSTRIA

Fachverband der Holzindustrie Österreichs
www.holzindustrie.at

BELGIUM

Fédération Belge de l'Industrie Textile, du Bois et de l'Ameublement
www.fedustria.be

CROATIA

Croatian Wood Cluster
www.drwniklaster.hr

DENMARK

Traeets Arbejdsgiverforening - Dansk Industri
www.di.dk

ESTONIA

Estonian Forest and Wood Industries Association
www.empl.ee

FINLAND

Finnish Forest Industries Federation
www.forestindustries.fi

Federation of the Finnish Woodworking Industries
www.puutuoteteollisuus.fi

GERMANY

Der Hauptverband der deutschen Holzindustrie
www.holzindustrie.de

ITALY

Assolegno di FederlegnoArredo
www.federlegnoarredo.it

LATVIA

Latvian Forest Industries Federation
www.lvkoksl.lv

NORWAY

Norwegian Wood Industry Federation
www.treindustrien.no

SLOVENIA

Sloles – Slovenian Wood Association
www.sloles.eu

SWEDEN

Swedish Forest Industries Federation
www.forestindustries.se

Swedish Federation of Wood and Furniture Industry
www.tmf.se

SWITZERLAND

Holzwirtschaft Schweiz
www.lignum.ch

THE NETHERLANDS

Nederlandse Bond van Timmerfabrikanten
www.nbvt.nl

UNITED KINGDOM

Timber Development UK
www.ttf.co.uk

LITHUANIA

Medienos Perdirbimo Asociacija
www.mpaa.lt

5.2 European Sector Organisations:

European Institute for Wood Preservation
www.wei-ieo.org

European Federation of Wooden Pallet and Packaging Manufacturers
www.fefpeb.org

European Timber Trade Federation
www.ettf.info

European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry
www.eos-oes.eu



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6 CEI-Bois Team

6.1 Board of Directors

- CEI-Bois President: Sampsa Auvinen (Latvia)
- Michael Pfeifer (FV Holzindustrie, Austria)
- Stephen King (TDUK, United Kingdom)
- Rob van Hoesel (FEFPEB, The Netherlands)
- Denny Ohnesorge (HDH, Germany)
- Henrik Söderström (FFIF & FWIF, Finland)
- Mathias Fridholm (Skogindustrierna & TMF, Sweden)
- Ana Dijan (Croatian Wood Cluster, Croatia)



6.2 Secretariat

- Secretary General: Silvia Melegari
- Director of Public Affairs: Paul Brannen
- Policy Officer: Claudiu-Nicolae Sonda
- Technical Advisor: Andrew Norton
- Communications and Social Affairs: François Sougnez
- Administration & Accounting Support: Aurélie Bunneghem

6.3 Working Group Chairs

- **Sustainability Working Group:** Mr Gregory Richards (Director, Policy and Regulations - Stora Enso, Wood Products Division)
- **Construction Working Group:** Mr Dieter Lechner (Deputy Managing Director and Head of the Construction Department - Association of the Austrian Wood Industries)
- **R&D Working Group:** Mr Johan Elvnert (Secretary General - Forest-based Sector Technology Platform)
- **Social Affairs Working Group:** Ms Charlotta Steinwall (Responsible for international employer affairs and negotiator - Swedish Association of Industrial Employers)
- **Trade Working Group:** Mr Stephen King (Strategic Advisor - SCA Products, UK)

