



European Federation
of Building
and Woodworkers



JOINT DECLARATION:

THE EUROPEAN WOODWORKING SOCIAL PARTNERS ARE COMMITTED TO EU'S CLIMATE AMBITION

Brussels, 08 November 2021

The 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) is bringing parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

On this occasion, the European Woodworking Social Partners express their support for the goals laid down in the European Green Deal and welcome the European ambitions to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The European Woodworking Industries play a fundamental role in the transition to a sustainable, green, and carbon-neutral Europe.

Climate change is one of the most pressing and complex issues facing society in the 21st century. While forests can make an important contribution towards tackling the problem of climate change, the use wood products can also provide broader social, economic and environmental benefits as well as contributing to climate change mitigation efforts.

As indicated in the Green Deal communication by the European Commission ([COM\(2019\) 640 final](#)), the building sector today accounts for some 40% of energy consumed and for about 40% of CO₂ emissions. A significant percentage of which comes from our traditional ways of architectural design and the extraction, processing, and energy-intensive manufacturing of building products. To achieve net zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, construction must rapidly decarbonise while responding to the needs of a growing urban population, the increasing demand for new buildings and has to manage the urgent requirement to renovate existing buildings. **Wood-based solutions offer a green construction material that is renewable, recyclable and has a low fossil carbon footprint.** Making responsibly sourced wood the first-choice material for building products is the simplest and quickest way to ensure that the construction industry and the built environment reduce their CO₂ emissions.

Building a “greener” Europe allows for many opportunities for our industries, but it also creates challenges. Europe’s climate ambition should be a tool for boosting initiatives to promote sustainable and energy efficient buildings and at the same time further support the **creation of green and safe jobs**. In this respect, the EU Skills agenda should play a central role in ensuring the strengthening of implementing **technological change** and progressive ways of **work organisation, sustainable competitiveness, social fairness** (access to education, new skills, training, lifelong learning) and building resilience to react to future crises and economic distortions. **Upskilling workforce with green and digital skills is essential.** Today, skills gaps are already recognized as a major challenge in many sectors, including in the renovation and construction of buildings. **The acquisition of the right skills is the prerequisite to make the successful transition to a climate neutral Europe.** Managing those processes successfully will also increase the attractiveness of the woodworking sectors for young persons and can contribute to the development of our rural areas.

We also express our commitment to contribute to the above-mentioned proposals and make them work.

About the signatories:

[The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers \(EFBWW\)](#) is the European Trade Union Federation grouping 76 national free trade unions from 34 countries with members in the building, building materials, woodworking, forestry and allied industries and trades.

[The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries \(CEI-Bois\)](#) represents 22 European and National organisations from 16 countries and is the body backing the interests of the whole industrial European wood sector: more than 180,000 companies generating an annual turnover of 152 billion euros and employing 1 million workers in the EU.