



European  
Commission

# HIGH LEVEL CONSTRUCTION FORUM

## Meeting report

Third meeting of the High Level Construction Forum:  
Launch of the Transition Pathway for Construction

Technical Secretariat of the HLCF / 15 March 2023

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## General overview

On the 15th of March 2023, the High Level Construction Forum (HLCF) organised its third annual meeting to launch the Transition Pathway for a resilient, greener and more digital construction ecosystem<sup>1</sup>, with a special focus on:

- Part 1: Presentation of the Transition Pathway document, followed by a Q&A session between HLCF members and the main drafters.
- Part 2: Panel discussion about priorities and commitments from HLCF members, where members shared some initial reactions to the document.

The following **key messages** were raised during the meeting:

- The Transition Pathway for construction will serve as a roadmap for policymaking in the coming years, especially in light of the Fit-for-55 package. It is a forward-looking policy report, rather than a concrete proposal requiring an impact assessment.
- **The document is structured into six building blocks:** (1) competitiveness of the ecosystem, (2) skilled labour, (3) enabling framework, (4) finance and research, (5) safe and fair built environment and (6) governance and monitoring. **The process of co-creating recommendations for action has been initiated from through a bottom-up approach.** This is because the recommendations included in each building block are not restricted to those proposed by the Commission, but also include those suggested by the HLCF in response to public consultations and HLCF events.
- The Transition Pathway **will be a living document, adaptable and open to continuous improvement.** Future events of the HLCF will focus on the co-implementation of the proposed actions of the Transition Pathway for construction.

Attendance at the meeting reached as high as 135, out of 221 registrations.

## Background of the Transition Pathway for Construction

*Ms Katharina KNAPTON-VIERLICH, Head of Unit, DG GROW H.1, European Commission, welcomed attendees at the third meeting of the High Level Construction Forum. With more than 800 members, she stressed that **the HLCF is the major tool of communication, exchange and co-creation for all actors of the EU construction ecosystem.** The aim of this third annual meeting was to celebrate the publication of the *Transition pathway for a resilient, greener and more digital construction ecosystem*<sup>2</sup>, which is the major opus of the construction unit at DG GROW and will serve as a roadmap for policymaking in the coming years, especially in light of the European Commission's Fit for 55 package<sup>3</sup>. *Ms Knapton-Vierlich* thanked everyone for their contributions during the co-creating process and encouraged the dissemination of the Transition Pathway, as well as commitments for actions.*

*Ms Kerstin JORNA, Director-General, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) spoke about the challenges faced by the construction ecosystem. She highlighted that the construction sector is at the heart of the challenges faced by the green transition, given that it generates the largest amount of waste in the EU (37%)<sup>4</sup> and consumes the highest amount of energy (40%)<sup>5</sup> She also brought to the fore the question of energy efficiency, by flagging that most of the*

<sup>1</sup> Please find the Transition Pathway for Construction here: <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/53854>

<sup>2</sup> Please find the document here: <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/53854>

<sup>3</sup> More details: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/green-deal/fit-for-55-the-eu-plan-for-a-green-transition/>

<sup>4</sup> The data for 2020 can be found here: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Waste\\_statistics#Total\\_waste\\_generation](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Waste_statistics#Total_waste_generation)

<sup>5</sup> See: [https://commission.europa.eu/news/focus-energy-efficiency-buildings-2020-02-17\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/news/focus-energy-efficiency-buildings-2020-02-17_en)

buildings in the EU are not energy efficient. Accordingly, she stressed the importance of the recent goals adopted by the European Parliament on the proposed Energy Efficiency Performance of Buildings Directive<sup>6</sup>.

Building on this, *Ms Jorna* stressed the need for new solutions in the construction ecosystem, as well as in all industrial ecosystems in the EU. Accordingly, she discussed aim of the Transition Pathways, which are designed to help lift the fog of uncertainty faced by entrepreneurs and allow the whole ecosystem to understand where the industry wants to be in 20-30 years. She explained that **Transition Pathways have already been successfully implemented in other ecosystems, such as the tourism<sup>7</sup> and chemical industry<sup>8</sup> and have contributed to a more detailed understanding of the overall business case.** Ms Jorna also highlighted the skills shortage faced by the construction industry and discussed the need for people with the right skills to implement new technologies and ways of building.

## Presentation of the Transition Pathway for a resilient, greener and more digital construction ecosystem

*Mr Philippe MOSELEY, Policy Officer, DG GROW H.1*, provided the audience with some context on the Transition Pathway before diving into its content. He started by reminding the audience that construction is the second largest (among the 14) industrial ecosystems identified in the European Industrial Strategy<sup>9</sup>. The ecosystem is dominated by SMEs and micro-enterprises.

The process of developing the Transition Pathway began with the updated of the Industrial Strategy in 2021. The first meeting of the HLCF was held shortly after that, followed by several thematic meetings<sup>10</sup>, which resulted in the Staff Working Document that the Commission published in December 2021<sup>11</sup>. The document set out the scenarios for the transition and was open for public consultation, which received well over 100 detailed written responses<sup>12</sup>. They also presented the Staff Working Document at various events, including the EU Industry Days<sup>13</sup>, the Council Working Party on Technical Harmonisation<sup>14</sup>, the new European Bauhaus workshops<sup>15</sup>. He explained they have been preparing the Transition Pathway since the consultation closed in March 2022.

<sup>6</sup> See:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/2023/3/press\\_release/20230310IPR77228/20230310IPR77228\\_en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/2023/3/press_release/20230310IPR77228/20230310IPR77228_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Transition Pathway for tourism: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_22\\_850](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_850)

<sup>8</sup> Transition Pathway for the chemical industry: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/chemicals/transition-pathway\\_en#:~:text=In%20January%202023%2C%20the%20European,NGOs%20and%20other%20interested%20parties.](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/chemicals/transition-pathway_en#:~:text=In%20January%202023%2C%20the%20European,NGOs%20and%20other%20interested%20parties.)

<sup>9</sup> See: [https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/european-industrial-strategy\\_en](https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/european-industrial-strategy_en)

<sup>10</sup> More information on first HLCF and thematic cluster meetings held in 2021: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/news/launch-high-level-construction-forum-2021-09-28\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/news/launch-high-level-construction-forum-2021-09-28_en)

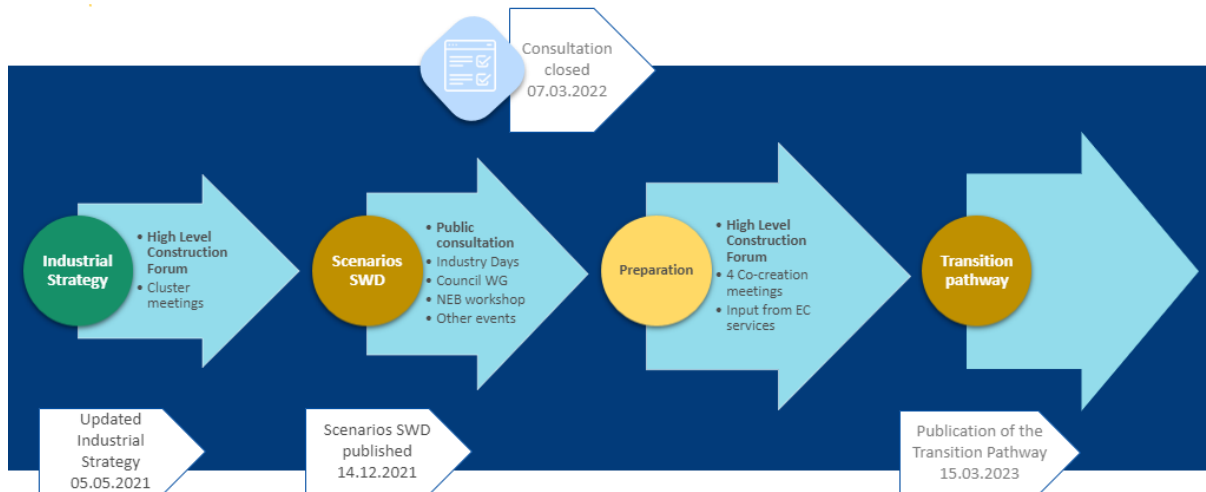
<sup>11</sup> See: <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/47996>

<sup>12</sup> For more details, see the report (<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/51254>) and the executive summary (<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/51255>)

<sup>13</sup> See: [https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/business-and-industry/eu-industry-days\\_en](https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/business-and-industry/eu-industry-days_en)

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/preparatory-bodies/working-party-technical-harmonisation/#:~:text=The%20Working%20Party%20on%20Technical,radio%20equipment>

<sup>15</sup> See: [https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/get-involved/festival\\_en#:~:text=When%20and%20where%20does%20it,from%20anywhere%20in%20the%20world.](https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/get-involved/festival_en#:~:text=When%20and%20where%20does%20it,from%20anywhere%20in%20the%20world.)



**Figure 1: Timeline for the development of the Transition Pathway for Construction**

Mr Moseley explained that **the document is structured into six building blocks**: (1) competitiveness of the ecosystem, (2) skilled labour, (3) enabling framework, (4) finance and research, (5) safe and fair built environment and (6) governance and monitoring. He emphasised that **the process of co-creating recommendations for action has been initiated from through a bottom-up process**. This is because **the recommendations included in each building block are not restricted to those proposed by the Commission. In fact, they have been suggested by the HLCF in response to public consultations and HLCF events**.

### Building block 1: Competitiveness

Mr Pieter STAELENS, Policy Officer at DG GROW H.1, emphasised that the construction ecosystem is critical to the EU economy, employing 25 million people and providing almost 10% of the EU's total added value. Mr Staelens explained that the construction industry encounters various challenges. These include an aging workforce and difficulties in attracting young workers, as well as negative perceptions about the industry being slow to address decarbonisation and lacking technological innovation. However, despite facing the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain disruptions due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the industry has shown resilience and positive output and productivity figures in 2022.

Mr Staelens stressed the importance of recognising that that construction is intertwined with other ecosystems and global markets, and that various networks aid in promoting growth and competitiveness. He also noted that technological start-ups are driving innovation and economic and societal value by digitalising the industry from outside. Regarding competitiveness, Mr Staelens outlined several key objectives that the EU and Member States should implement. These include ensuring an equitable playing field within EU markets, bolstering the number of start-ups, expediting technological advancements, and fostering more sustainable construction practices.

### Building block 2: Skills and talent

Mr Roman HORVATH, Policy Officer, DG GROW H.1, spoke about **the importance of upskilling and reskilling the construction workforce to support the twin transition**. He emphasised that upskilling of qualified construction professionals requires collaboration and partnership creation. Accordingly, he explained that the Commission is providing funding for pilot training through the Erasmus+<sup>16</sup> and

<sup>16</sup> See: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/capacity-building-vet>

Skills Initiative funded by the LIFE programme<sup>17 18</sup>, as well as promoting initiatives from the Pact for Skills<sup>19</sup> to facilitate partnerships.

*Mr Horvath* highlighted that the construction industry has a crucial role in facilitating the transition to a greener European economy. Therefore, he emphasised the importance of making use of these resources to provide reskilling opportunities for the construction workforce. He also pointed out that the shortage of labour force in the construction sector could be mitigated by attracting women and migrants. He ended the overview of the second building block by noting that the Commission is also offering diverse incentives for the construction ecosystem through the Recovery and Resilience Facility<sup>20</sup> and the EU Cohesion Policy<sup>21</sup>.

### Building block 3: Enabling framework

*Mr Moseley* started by discussing **the enabling framework for the green transition**. He emphasised the significance of the enabling regulatory and policy framework, while also highlighting to the audience that **Member States hold a crucial responsibility in this field, given that building regulations fall under their national jurisdiction**. *Mr Moseley* highlighted that **the Construction Products Regulation, currently under revision, is a major part of the green transition and is key to advancing the circular economy**.

In terms of practical challenges facing construction, the renovation of buildings is a significant area of focus. *Mr Moseley* emphasised the importance of the ongoing negotiations regarding the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive<sup>22</sup>. Additionally, the reduction of lifecycle emissions in construction for buildings by 2050 is a high priority, and there are national and industry roadmaps to decarbonise. He also explained that the section on construction sites underlines the importance of prioritising renovation over demolition and reconstruction. *Mr Moseley* also stressed the importance of supporting the large-scale rollout of industrialised techniques for resource-efficient production and renovation.

With respect to **the enabling framework for the digital transition**, *Mr Staelens* shared some examples that are pushing forward this agenda, e.g., the Data Act<sup>23 24</sup> and the Artificial Intelligence Act<sup>25</sup>, while also stressing that cybersecurity is a major concern for further digitalisation. On the one hand, he provided a summary of important digital technologies that the private sector - including SMEs - are adopting, such as BIM drones, 3D printing, and scanning. These technologies lead to carbon-efficient applications and promote innovation in facility management. On the other hand, *Mr Staelens* pointed out that digital initiatives are also being rolled out by public authorities, including the introduction of digital building logbooks and permit systems. In a nutshell, to enable digitalisation in the construction ecosystem, the Pathway recommends taking specific actions by the Commission, Member States, and the entire ecosystem, i.e., creating a digital framework for construction-related regulations and data collection, ensuring that systems can interoperate, and providing strong governance for privacy and security.

<sup>17</sup> See: [https://ec.europa.eu/Commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda\\_22\\_6984](https://ec.europa.eu/Commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_22_6984)

<sup>18</sup> For more details, see also: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/life-2022-cet-buildskills>

<sup>19</sup> See: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1517&langId=en>

<sup>20</sup> See: [https://Commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility\\_en](https://Commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en)

<sup>21</sup> See: [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/2021-2027\\_en#:~:text=EU%20Cohesion%20Policy%20contributes%20to,the%20green%20and%20digital%20transition.](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/2021-2027_en#:~:text=EU%20Cohesion%20Policy%20contributes%20to,the%20green%20and%20digital%20transition.)

<sup>22</sup> For more details: [https://ec.europa.eu/Commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda\\_21\\_6686](https://ec.europa.eu/Commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_21_6686)

<sup>23</sup> the Data Act serves as a framework for data security and privacy:

[https://ec.europa.eu/Commission/presscorner/detail/e%20n/ip\\_22\\_1113](https://ec.europa.eu/Commission/presscorner/detail/e%20n/ip_22_1113)

<sup>24</sup> More details about recent developments on the data act in the European Parliament;

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/data-privacy/news/eu-lawmakers-formalise-position-on-the-data-act-in-plenary-vote/>

<sup>25</sup> The artificial intelligence act provides harmonised rules for the potential of AI in the construction ecosystem:

<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-approach-artificial-intelligence>

*Mr Horvath* concluded the overview of building block 3 by highlighting the issue of **late payments**, which is a significant problem for construction companies, as it is one of the main causes of bankruptcies in the Union. He mentioned that **the European Commission is presently reviewing the late payment directive through a public consultation process**<sup>26</sup>. He emphasised that we should concentrate on facilitating cross-border professional services and minimising administrative burdens on construction workers' mobility to enable construction firms to realise their full potential.

### Building block 4: Research, Innovation, Technology

When explaining building block 4, *Mr Moseley* highlighted the challenges faced by the construction ecosystem in adopting digital tools and innovations. Key issues limiting investments included the fragmented nature of the sector, low awareness, slim profit margins for businesses, and high technology costs. Accordingly, *Mr Moseley* explained the pathway's recommendation to align investments with the recently launched *European Research Area (ERA) roadmap for circular technologies and business models* in construction<sup>27</sup>. In addition, building block 4 also refers to clusters four<sup>28</sup> and five<sup>29</sup> of the Horizon Europe program as well as to the need to foster synergies between various EU-funded and national construction and research programs.

### Building block 5: Funding

Regarding building block 5 (Funding), *Mr Staelens* highlighted the challenges faced **by SMEs and micro-enterprises in the construction ecosystem, which comprise 90% of companies** and struggle with limited working capital, higher perceived business risk, and constrained bargaining power for financing deals. The building block recognises the need for a mix of public support and private finance to achieve ambitious goals, such as those in the proposals for the revisions of the Energy Efficiency<sup>30</sup> and the Energy Performance of Buildings<sup>31</sup> Directives. He also explained that the recommendations in building block 5 centre around specific goals: (1) better linking private funding with green and digital ambitions, (2) creating the right criteria for public funding towards the construction ecosystem, and (3) supporting SMEs in accessing finance and reducing systemic barriers.

### Building blocks 6: Towards a fair and safe built environment

*Mr Horvath* explained building block 6 and emphasised that construction policies directly affect Europeans' lives, including the availability, quality, and safety of housing. Affordability of housing is a key concern, as recent greening efforts require investments that many households cannot afford, leading to energy poverty. Accordingly, he highlighted that the EU is providing support through

<sup>26</sup> See: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13665-Late-payments-update-of-EU-rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13665-Late-payments-update-of-EU-rules_en)

<sup>27</sup> The *ERA industrial technology roadmap for circular technologies and business models* makes specific recommendations for investment in research for circular technologies in construction. See the document here: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/32f12c4b-9d89-11ed-b508-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-279513935>

<sup>28</sup> Cluster 4 of the Horizon Europe programme also has a focus on the twin transition of construction. See: [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-4-digital-industry-and-space\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-4-digital-industry-and-space_en)

<sup>29</sup> Cluster 5 of the Horizon Europe programme includes a focus on a sustainable built environment, under the Built4People Partnership. See: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2021-d4-02-03>

<sup>30</sup> See: [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-targets-directive-and-rules/energy-efficiency-directive\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-targets-directive-and-rules/energy-efficiency-directive_en)

<sup>31</sup> See: [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/energy-performance-buildings-directive\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/energy-performance-buildings-directive_en)

initiatives like the Affordable Housing Initiative<sup>32</sup> and the Just Transition Mechanism<sup>33</sup>. He explained that this building block addresses the need for safe and fair housing, tackling affordability, energy poverty, and various aspects of building safety, including asbestos<sup>34</sup>, indoor air quality<sup>35</sup>, and fire safety<sup>36</sup>.

## Annexes

Lastly, *Mr Moseley* explained that there are **two annexes in the Transition Pathway**. The first annex visualises the recommendations for action, grouping them into seven colour-coded diagrams based on the provided key. These diagrams show the timing of each action over the short, medium, or long term. The second annex lists all the commitments received from the High Level Construction Forum, industry roadmaps, national roadmaps, national strategies for construction, and other commitments gathered through public consultation. *Mr Moseley* emphasised that they welcome more commitments to action in the future, in line with the Transition Pathway. *Mr Moseley* ended the presentation of the Transition Pathway by inviting stakeholders to check its website<sup>37</sup>.

## Q&A session

The Q&A session between the audience and the main drafters was moderated by *Jan Maarten DE VET*, Project Director, Technical Secretariat of the High Level Construction Forum.

With respect to **the role and context of the pathway**, particularly on whether an **impact assessment** had been carried out, *Mr Moseley* highlighted that the development of the Transition Pathway was a co-creation process, with inputs from various stakeholders. The document presents a coherent vision for the construction sector, encompassing all relevant policies and pathways. Therefore, he flagged that there is no impact assessment since it is not a legislative proposal. *Ms Knapton-Vierlich* also explained that the Transition Pathway is a forward-looking policy report, rather than a concrete proposal requiring an impact assessment. While some of the proposed actions may require such assessments in the future, the report serves as a vision for the construction ecosystem's future.

Regarding initiatives by the Commission to **quantify construction's economic potential** and status quo in greater detail, *Mr Staelens* explained that The European Construction Sector Observatory<sup>38</sup> plans to work on monitoring the construction sector and the built environment with many indicators and parameters.

In addition, the discussion further elaborated on **the consideration of climate change and its impact on the construction sector, specifically regarding rising sea levels**. *Mr Moseley* provided further details on the positioning and incorporation of the green transition within the document, outlining the objectives and aspirations associated with it. Accordingly, he highlighted that sea level rise pertains to urban planning, which is very specific, while **the Transition Pathway focuses on the**

<sup>32</sup> See: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/affordable-housing-initiative\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/affordable-housing-initiative_en)

<sup>33</sup> See: [https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/finance-and-green-deal/just-transition-mechanism\\_en](https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/finance-and-green-deal/just-transition-mechanism_en)

<sup>34</sup> The European Commission published a communication on an asbestos-free future in September 2022, with a legislative proposal for monitoring and registration of asbestos expected soon. See: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&furtherNews=yes&newsId=10418>

<sup>35</sup> The European Commission aims to Assess pathways and policy options to improve indoor air quality, and propose legislative measure as relevant within its 'zero pollution action plan'. See: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=COM%3A2021%3A400%3AFIN>

<sup>36</sup>The European Commission created a Fire Information Exchange Platform for sharing experiences, knowledge, and best practices. See call for tenders from 2018: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/calls-tenders/technical-secretariat-fire-information-exchange-platform\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/calls-tenders/technical-secretariat-fire-information-exchange-platform_en)

<sup>37</sup> In the dedicated Transition Pathway website for construction one can find the entire process of developing the Transition Pathway, recordings of the High Level Construction Forum meetings, and reports of all the meetings for reference. See: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/construction/construction-transition-pathway\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/construction/construction-transition-pathway_en)

<sup>38</sup> See: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/construction/observatory\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/construction/observatory_en)



**broader green transition, which aims to create a framework that encourages investment and aligns actions across the EU.**

Lastly, the Q&A session referred to **the need to attract young talent to the construction sector**, despite the competition with other industries and existing prejudices about the field. *Mr Horvath* highlighted the numerous opportunities within the construction sector, including high-tech jobs, stability, and growth potential. As the sector undergoes the twin transition, *Mr Horvath* stressed the importance of showcasing the modernisation and innovation in the industry to encourage young people and their parents to consider careers in construction.

## Panel discussion on priorities and commitments from members of the High Level Construction Forum

### Opening reactions to the Transition Pathway by members of the HLCF

*Mr Piero PETRUCCO, Vice-President, European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC)* brought **the perspective of the construction industry** and entrepreneurs to the panel. Regarding his initial thoughts on the Transition Pathway for construction, he highlighted the significance of a European framework that helps outline Transition Pathways toward carbon neutrality by 2050 at both national and organisational levels. He also emphasised the complexity of the construction process, the need for strengthened cooperation along the supply chain, well-defined milestones, a monitoring system, and a **methodological framework for implementing the Transition Pathway, which should be carried out in close collaboration with all stakeholders while considering their individual and national specificities.**

*Ms Milena FEUSTEL, Senior Advisor at the German Federal Institute for Real Estate and Deputy Chair of the EU BIM Task Group*, brought **the perspective of the EU BIM Task Group and a Germany on digital tools.** She expressed her appreciation for the comprehensive and well-structured report produced by the European Commission and HLCF members. She particularly appreciated the bottom-up approach of the HLCF, fostering cooperation between public and private stakeholders and the European Commission. Emphasising **the vital role of digitisation and building information management in promoting a circular and digital construction, she highlighted its potential to enhance the EU single market.** *Ms Feustel* believes that building information management can contribute to the competitiveness, upskilling of manpower, and greener environment in the construction sector, as well as help in planning, assessing, and monitoring green goals. She also mentioned the importance of digitisation in attracting young talent and making the construction sector more appealing. *Ms Feustel* expressed her eagerness to collaborate with all stakeholders and the Commission to ensure an efficient and sustainable transition for the construction sector.

*Mr Stephen RICHARDSON, Director Europe, World Green Building Council*, brought **the perspective of the Green Building Councils**, expressing his gratitude for the Transition Pathway document and the extensive consultation process. He appreciated the report being treated as a living document, which allows for continuous updates and improvements. He welcomed the need for clearer indicators on delivering the transition and the changes required, as well as the recognition of a safe and fair built environment that addresses the workforce, residents, and building owners. *Mr Richardson* also emphasised the importance of a just transition and ensuring sustainability is at the heart of the construction sector's goals. He suggested that the document could provide more details on how it maps onto specific legislative files and policy frameworks, as well as the short, medium, and long-term timeframes for the transition. He called for a collaborative approach in prioritising key policies and frameworks, highlighting the significance of the recently approved Energy Performance of Buildings Directive vote at the European Parliament.

Mr Anders LINDHOLM, Counsellor for Education at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU, brought the **perspective of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union<sup>39</sup>, making links with skills for the green transition**. He explained that the Swedish Presidency has focused on reinforcing green skills, crucial for the green transition. Mr Lindholm observed that skills mapping and skills intelligence for the green transition are trailing compared to the digital transition. **He urged for renewed efforts in skills identification and promoting collaboration between industry and education providers to accommodate the evolving demands of the green transition**. In addition, he made links with **the European Year of Skills<sup>40</sup>**, which aims to address specific skills shortages in industries like construction. *Mr Lindholm* hopes that the Transition Pathway for construction can be supported through events and roundtable discussions during the European Year of Skills.

## Discussion

Regarding **the implementation of BIM in the public sector**, *Ms Feustel* highlighted the EU BIM Task Group's recent adjustments to their roadmap, which aligns with the European Commission's suggestions. She emphasised their plan to focus on public procurement and building information management, with **the aim of accelerating BIM adoption in the public sector, as it is already more advanced in the private sector**. Building on this, the EU BIM Task Group has published a handbook for introducing BIM,<sup>41</sup> offering cost-benefit analysis and guidance on estimating individual advantages for clients. The Task Group will conduct three workshops and host a BIM for Public Procurement Conference this year<sup>42</sup>. *Ms Feustel* explained that key topics of discussion will include Open BIM, the Common Data Environment, and BIM implementation in large organisations.

In addition, *Ms Feustel* shared **the experience of Germany in implementing novel digital tools in construction**. In Germany, the government has ambitious goals with the Climate Change Act<sup>43</sup>, aiming for a climate-neutral country by 2045 and setting benchmarks for the building sector. By 2025, new houses should only use 40% of their energy from non-renewable sources. The government also plans to introduce digital building passports for circularity in construction and focus on timber, lightweight construction, and raw material security. As a leading BIM country, she explained that Germany has developed roadmaps for infrastructure and buildings, with a focus on making public projects more efficient<sup>44</sup>. Although there is much work to do, *Ms Feustel* stressed that there is a strong foundation at both the European and national level.

Concerning the greening of the construction ecosystem, *Mr Petrucco* discussed some commitments and obstacles from the viewpoint of the industry. He discussed the strategic vision prepared by his association to help companies address sustainability challenges in the coming years. They are committed to developing sustainable design guidelines, defining a sustainable supply chain strategy, and offering targeted training for workers. Many companies have already started adopting greener practices, such as decarbonising vehicle fleets and using sustainable construction machinery. However, *Mr Petrucco* expressed **concern about the additional costs associated with sustainable products, particularly steel and cement, stressing the need to recognise these costs in public procurement**.

<sup>39</sup> See: <https://swedish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/>

<sup>40</sup> See: [https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/european-year-skills-2023\\_en](https://Commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/european-year-skills-2023_en)

<sup>41</sup> Download the handbook here: <http://www.eubim.eu/handbook/>

<sup>42</sup> See recording and key takeaways from last general assembly (01/03/2023) here: <http://www.eubim.eu/eubtg-reboot-general-assembly-1st-march-2023/>

<sup>43</sup> See summary of the German Federal Climate Change Act in English: [https://www.bmu.de/fileadmin/Daten\\_BMU/Download\\_PDF/Gesetze/ksg\\_final\\_en\\_bf.pdf](https://www.bmu.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Gesetze/ksg_final_en_bf.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> See, for instance, *the Roadmap for Digital Design and Construction*, developed by the German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure: [https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/EN/publications/road-map-for-digital-design-and-construction.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/EN/publications/road-map-for-digital-design-and-construction.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

In relation to **the importance of skills in implementing circular approaches**, *Mr Petrucco* mentioned the completion of a new project blueprint for sectorial skills and the signing of the pact for skills with the European Federation of Building and Wood Workers and the European Builders Confederation<sup>45</sup>. This pact focuses on upskilling and reskilling workers to address skill shortages and prepare them for new job opportunities. He emphasised the need for support from the broader environment to help companies successfully transition towards sustainability.

Building on the topic of skills, *Mr Lindholm* highlighted **the differences between upskilling and reskilling in the context of the green transition**. He stressed that the former applies to many professionals working in the construction industry who already possess relevant skills but need to upskill with additional training for the green transition. He also introduced the concept of **micro-credentials**, which are short training modules that can be combined to create a new profile. However, he noted the importance of validation and accreditation for these smaller, targeted educational tools. To make this happen, *Mr Lindholm* highlighted **the need for inter-industry discussions, as well as cooperation between the industry and education providers to ensure skilled professionals are recognised for their new skills**.

*Mr Richardson* concluded the discussion by highlighting **the importance of national transposition in successfully implementing Transition Pathways** and Research & Innovation funds. Accordingly, he explained that 10 Green Building Councils have already developed national roadmaps for the decarbonisation of construction through a project called Building Life<sup>46</sup>, which has involved extensive consultation with stakeholders. These roadmaps have led to the development of new training capacities, tools, and data to support the transition.

With respect to **Research and Innovation funds**, *Mr Richardson* discussed the Built4People partnership with the European Commission and the European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP<sup>47</sup>), which aims to co-programme around €400 million of EU funds for Research and Innovation. This collaboration aims to leverage more than €400 million of private investment to address the urgent challenges outlined in the Transition Pathway document. He emphasised **the commitment to aligning their work programme with the Transition Pathway document to ensure the most effective use of funds and collaboration across the industry**.

## Concluding remarks and next steps from the Commission

*Ms Knapton-Vierlich* closed the session by summarising key points of discussion. She noted the importance of involving all levels, from Member States to individual companies, in implementing sustainable changes in the construction sector. *Ms Knapton-Vierlich* also highlighted the importance of procurement in modernising construction and the challenges it poses for public authorities. She expressed her appreciation for the document's focus on fire safety and building security, while also emphasising that sustainability should be an underlying principle in all construction policies. The Transition Pathway will be **a living document, adaptable and open to continuous improvement**.

In closing, she thanked all participants for their contributions and acknowledged the challenges of virtual networking. Despite this, she expressed gratitude for the comments and questions received and encouraged continued engagement and collaboration moving forward.

<sup>45</sup> See: <https://www.fiec.eu/news/news-2022/eu-pact-skills-construction-out>

<sup>46</sup> See: <https://worldgbc.org/buildinglife/>

<sup>47</sup> See: <https://www.ectp.org/>

## Annex – List of participating organisations

#SustainablePublicAffairs	CPA
365 Sherpas	Deutsche Bauchemie e.V.
3M	DG ENER
Afnor	DHUP
Agora Energiewende	DigitalTwin Technology GmbH
ANCE	Deutsche Bauchemie e.V.
ArcelorMittal	DG ENER
Architects' Council of Europe (ACE)	DHUP
ARGE - The European Federation of Locks & Building Hardware Manufacturers	DigitalTwin Technology GmbH
ART-ER	Directorate-General for Economic Activities
Assa Abloy	Dow
ASSA ABLOY Opening Solutions Sweden AB	Dow Italia
Association of the Austrian Wood Industries	Ecorys
ATIC - Associação Técnica da Indústria de Cimento	ECSPA - European Calcium Silicate Producers Associations
AUTODESK	ECTP
BAT	EDANA
BBF	EFBWW
BEAM CUBE	EFCA
Bentley Systems	EFCA- European Federation of Consulting Engineers
BIBM - Federation of the European Precast Concrete Industry	EFCC (European Federation for Construction Chemicals)
Biomason	EIC
BOUSSIAS	EPPA
Bouwend Nederland	Etex
Brussels Environment	EU BIM TASK GROUP
buildingSMART Czech Republic / czBIM	EUEW
Bygge- Anlæg- og Trækartellet BAT-KARTELLET	Eufca
C40 Cities	EUK Consulting
CCOO del Hábitat	EURIMA
CECOP - the European Confederation of Industrial and Service Cooperatives	EuroACE
CEI-Bois	EuroCommerce
CEMBUREAU, the European Cement Association	Eurogypsum
CEN and CENELEC	EUROLUX
CEN/TC442	European Aluminium
CERTIF - ASSOCIAÇÃO PARA A CERTIFICAÇÃO	European Commission - DG GROW
CINEA	European Commission - Joint research Centre
Circle Bank	European Consortium of Anchors Producers
Cobaty International	European Copper Institute
Concular	European Council of Civil Engineers
Confartigianato Imprese	European Demolition Association
Confcooperative	European Environmental Bureau
Confederación Nacional de la Construcción (CNC)	European Federation of Construction Chemicals (EFCC)
Construction Products Europe	European Federation of Fibre Cement Manufacturers

European Panel Federation	Nordic Council of Ministers
FEICA	Nordic Sustainable Construction
FEP - European Parquet Federation	NOVE
FFB	Office of Government Procurement (Ireland)
FIEC	OVAM
FEICA	Owens Corning
FEP - European Parquet Federation	Plastics Europe
FFB	PU Europe
FIEC	Ramboll
FIEC - European Construction Industry Federation	RICS
FIR	Rijkswaterstaat
Fire Safe Europe	Rina Consulting S.p.A.
FNTP	Romano
FOD Volksgezondheid	Sabic
Foster + Partners	Saint-Gobain
FPS Health & Environment	SBS- Small Business Standards
FUNDACIÓN LABORAL DE LA CONSTRUCCIÓN	SCS Railways / CEN TC 350
German Environmental Agency	SEP Lab
Glass for Europe	SGS INTRON
Government Offices of Sweden	Soprema
GS1	Spanish Association for Standardization, UNE
HaDEA	Squire Patton Boggs
Hauptverband der deutschen Bauindustrie	Stora Enso
Heidelberg Materials	Svenskt Trä
Holcim	Swedish Construction Federation
Hydrogen Europe	Swedish National Board of Housing Building and Planning
iC group	Swedish permanent representation
ILNAS	TEPPFA (The European Plastic Pipes and Fittings Association)
IMA-Europe	The Europea Steel Association, EUROFER
Interdisziplinäres Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture (IFZ)	TUS
John Sisk & Son	Ulrich Paetzold EU-Consulting
JON ARCHITECTS & PARTNERS SRL	UniBs
Kingspan	UNIEP
Knauf Gips KG	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
Latvian Forest Industry federation	University College Dublin
Laudes Foundation	University of Ljubljana, FGG
Le Forem	University of Palermo
Living Future Europe	University of Zagreb, Faculty of Architecture
METALS FOR BUILDINGS	VIALIS ENGINEERING SA
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications of Estonia	Wienerberger
Ministry of rural affairs and infrastructure (Sweden)	WindowMaster International A/S
Morgan Construction NI	World Green Building Council
MPO	ZDB German Construction Federation
Nadace ABF	

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