



Build Europe presents its Manifesto on housing in a press conference in Paris

Build Europe's Manifesto on housing has now been published. Hard copies have been sent to Members and digital copies can be downloaded from our new website ([here](#)). This marks a seminal moment for the Association ahead of the European elections, during which the Association wants to make its voice, and those of its Members, heard by policymakers. We would like to encourage you to use the Manifesto during your lobbying activities, during the electoral campaign, and during your meetings with national parliamentary candidates. Build Europe President Marc Pigeon will also be meeting with Commission services in the next weeks in order to present them our proposals. The President also recommends that you organise press conferences in your own countries to launch the Manifesto nationally, alongside your own proposals. The President did so successfully in Paris on 18 April, with extensive press coverage achieved. You can also find a press release on the Build Europe website, which you can use if you prefer. The President stands ready to attend your press conferences to speak alongside your federations about the housing crisis in Europe.

HOUSING POLICY NEWS

Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises

Build Europe attended the seventh meeting of the High Level Tripartite Strategic Forum on 4 April: the first session looked back at the achievements of the Construction 2020 initiative and what can be learned from them, while the second session looked beyond 2020. Two specific cases were presented: Ms. Marianne Hedberg (Sveriges Byggindustrier) presented her vision of resource efficiency for a world class and sustainable construction sector, while Mr. Enrique Corral (Fundacion Laboral de la Construcción) presented the Blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills in construction. Stakeholders voiced appreciation of the initiative, as its work has been very positive for the sector in terms of visibility and spreading good practice. Stakeholders advocated a stronger political presence for construction at European Commission level, echoing Build Europe proposals. During the second session, the Chair referred to the fact that currently a range of Directorate

Generals have a wide array of initiatives addressing the built environment, and that a more holistic approach is necessary to address these issues in an integrated manner.

IMF Newsletter – April 2019

This month's [newsletter](#) includes the latest housing market assessments in Bulgaria and Sweden, as well as a report on 'Assessing the Risk of the Next Housing Bust', and another on 'Fundamental and Speculative Demands for Housing'. It also includes an interview with Jenny Schuetz, David M. Rubenstein Fellow in the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution, about her research on housing supply, specifically on the current state of housing supply in the US.

FISCAL & FINANCIAL NEWS

The Energy Efficient Mortgages Initiative is defining the future: a greener future

The Energy Efficient Mortgages (EEM) Initiative is taking another important step towards its objective of delivering a standardised European framework and data collection architecture for energy efficient mortgages. To recall, the objective of the Initiative is to stimulate and finance investment in energy efficient buildings, energy saving renovations and anti-seismic measures – and, in this way, help to secure a greener and more sustainable future for all. The EEM Initiative is the concrete and tangible market response to the Action Plan on Sustainable Finance adopted by the European Commission. Luca Bertalot, Energy Efficient Mortgages Initiative Coordinator, stated: "The journey towards developing a European energy efficient mortgage market, by linking energy efficiency to financial processes and decision-making, and delivering a financial system that supports sustainable growth, requires actions across the entire financial system in close cooperation with the built environment world." The press release is available [here](#).

EMF-ECBC – April 2019

This month's [newsletter](#) includes the latest market insights and regulatory updates on key issues affecting European mortgage credit and covered bond markets. It notably includes the EMF Quarterly Review for the fourth quarter of 2018. The evolution of the market in Q4 2018 was characterised by an overall trend of continued stability throughout European housing markets; a modest rise in the volume of mortgages outstanding as well as in gross mortgage lending volumes; and the introduction of new regulation, in Spain focussing on real estate contracts transposing the EU Mortgage Credit directive, and in Romania focussing on lending conditions and borrower repayment capacity.

TECHNICAL NEWS

Accessibility Act: final act signed

On 17 April, the Presidents of the European Parliament and the European Council signed the final act on accessibility requirements for products and services. Build Europe lobbied the European Commission ahead of publication of its proposal, notably by visiting European Commissioner Marianne Thyssen's cabinet to explain the views and positions of the Association. The original proposal did not thus include any direct impact on the residential

building sector. Build Europe continued its efforts during the decision-making process, by meeting both Council representatives and the rapporteur on the file, to ensure that neither institution would amend the proposal in such a way that could impact the residential building sector. The Association also participated in a panel discussion at the European Parliament to present its views. Build Europe believes it is of utmost importance to the EU to uphold the subsidiarity principle at the heart of its policymaking on accessibility, and therefore leave it up to Member States to decide upon national standards regarding accessibility in buildings.

European Construction Forum: Joint Manifesto

On 24 May, Filiep Loosveldt and Fabian Willermain attended the European Construction Forum to discuss a joint manifesto, titled “Building tomorrow’s Europe today,” with other industry stakeholders of the construction sector. Build Europe defended the positions of the Association, most notably in terms of social housing. Construction stakeholders call upon the European Commission to strengthen the current construction policy context by creating a new vision for the built environment. The new framework should be based on the following principles: a specific targeted approach to construction, as the sector is at the crossroad of multiple European policies; an adaptable policy framework; a holistic approach towards policy making; and a strong partnership between the European institutions, the Member States and construction stakeholders. All those principles echo those of Build Europe’s Manifesto, which will provide much more strength to the Association’s own proposals. The draft manifesto is available [here](#).

Environmental Implementation Review

The Commission published the second Environmental Implementation Review, in order to improve the implementation of European environmental policy. Full implementation of EU environmental legislation could save the EU economy around €55 billion every year in health costs and direct costs to the environment. The Review maps out the situation of environmental policies and rules implementation in each EU country and identifies the causes of implementation gaps. It aims to assist national decision-makers by outlining the priorities requiring their attention. The package includes 28 [country reports](#) ([BE](#), [FR](#), [DE](#), [IE](#), [MT](#), [PL](#), [RO](#), [SP](#), [UK](#)) showing the state of play in the implementation of EU environmental law, as well as opportunities for improvement in each Member State; a [Communication](#) drawing conclusions and defining common trends at EU level; and recommendations for improvements to all Member States with key priority actions.

ECSO Newsletter – Circular Economy

This month’s newsletter includes three new policy fact sheets, focusing on policies from Slovenia, Portugal and Czech Republic. The reports provide an analysis of three national policies, influencing the development of the construction sector: the Slovenian National Housing Programme ([here](#)); the Portuguese Construction Technology Platform ([here](#)); and the Czech amendment to the Building Act ([here](#)). The newsletter also includes a new trend paper on the circular economy, containing relevant examples of good practice from a policy and industry perspective ([here](#)).

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

UK: New report urges post-Help to Buy provision for housing additionality

The National Housing Federation, the G15 group of housing associations and Homes for the North have published a report on the additionality of affordable housing. The report finds that while new home completions are predicted to reach 260,000 a year by 2021, “*longer-term delivery remains decidedly uncertain. In a challenging market, housebuilding in England may need to increase by up to a third between 2021 and 2025 to make up for the end of the current Help to Buy scheme and hit 300,000 homes a year.*” The report also argues that increased funding from central government for affordable housing, “*which has fallen dramatically from 50% of the cost of building a home before the financial crash to just 12% today*” will add to, and not replace, existing investment from the private sector. The report calls for increased government funding, more joint ventures between the private sector, councils and housing associations, and increased use of long-term funding models.

UPSI-BVS: the real estate sector wants to weigh on the future government

Legal insecurity, lack of transparency and consistency in decisions, administrative delays, abusive and vexatious recourse against permits issued, UPSI-BVS calls on the future Brussels government to change the situation. "If the political leaders of the future government forget that Brussels must urgently repopulate and densify to keep its rank in the international concert... If we continue like this, everything goes straight to the wall: inhabitants, public officials and private actors will come out losers!" The message hammered by Stéphan Sonnevile, President of the UPSI-BVS for the Brussels region, is unequivocal. The five priorities of the Association concern a development of the real estate taxation to encourage middle-income residents of Brussels to remain in the capital, a public-private dialogue to develop a regional planning regulation, the development of a policy optimised parking, the temporary freeze on the reinforcement of energy standards on new housing by first targeting those on housing to be renovated urgently and, finally, the management of appeals against planning permits, in protecting the public interest against reckless and vexatious procedures.

Build Europe activities

- 6 May: Monitoring Committee (Brussels, Belgium)
- 22 – 24 May: Build Europe Congress in Bucharest (Romania)
- 24 June: Build Europe attends the first stakeholder meeting on the feasibility study on Article 19a of EPBD

