



**European Woodworking Industry  
Manifesto 2014-2019**

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BOOSTING INDUSTRIAL  
GROWTH & JOBS IN EUROPE

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# Our Call to the EU Institutions

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Manufacturing sectors such as the woodworking industry sit at the heart of the European economy and are key drivers of jobs and growth. As a major part of the EU Forest-Based Industries (FB-I), the European woodworking and furniture industry is the **EU's fifth largest manufacturing industry**, contributing € 218bn to the European economy and **generating over 2.1 million jobs**, many of which are found in rural areas.

We look forward to playing our part in helping Europe achieve the goal **of increasing industry's share of GDP to 20% by 2020**.

The woodworking industry has set itself the goal of increasing its total annual industrial output by 4%. Such an increase would contribute €2.35bn to the European economy, including €405 million per year in increased tax revenues for Member States while also creating 80,000 new jobs and reducing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an additional 150 million tonnes.

A favourable operating climate is essential for the woodworking industry to continue to deliver the jobs and the positive economic impact that comes with growth. To achieve this goal we would welcome your support on the following policy priorities.



*We call on all MEPs who support  
our manifesto to join the European  
Parliament Club du Bois.*

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## About Us

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### European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois):

CEI-Bois has 27 European and National Member Federations in 17 countries. It is the main body defending and representing the interests of the European woodworking industries, which includes more than 184,000 companies generating an annual turnover of 122 billion euros and employing around 1.1 million workers in the EU.

### European Panel Federation (EPF):

EPF has members in 25 countries and represents the manufactures of particle board, MDF, OSB, hard and softboard. The EU wood panel industry has a turnover of about 22 billion euro every year, creates over 100,000 jobs directly and counts more than 5,000 enterprises in Europe.

### The European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS):

Through its member countries EOS represents some 35,000 sawmills in 13 countries across Europe manufacturing sawn boards, timber frames, glulam, decking, flooring, joinery, fencing and several other wood products. Together they represent 75% of the total European sawn wood output and a turnover of almost 34 billion EUR, creating over 259,000 job opportunities annually in the EU.

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## Our Policy Priorities

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### 1/ Competitiveness & Industry

- Ensure a level playing field that supports the procurement and manufacturing of wood products
- Facilitate better access to funding and support investment
- Avoid divergence within EU legislation and reduce administrative burdens

### 2/ Environment & Climate Change

- Encourage the increased use of wood in construction and in daily life applications
- Prolong the life cycle of wood and optimise the use of wood to foster a resource efficient bio-based economy
- Re-organise incentives to improve the total supply of wood as a raw material

### 3/ Agriculture & Rural Development

- Encourage afforestation and reforestation across Europe
- Avoid the leakage of raw materials without processing and develop a stricter anti-dumping and anti-subsidy policy

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# I / Competitiveness & Industry

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To effectively play its part in the re-industrialisation of Europe, the woodworking industry has set itself the goal of increasing its total annual industrial output by 4%. Such an increase would contribute €2.35bn to the European economy, including €405 million per year in increased tax revenues for Member States while also creating 80,000 new jobs and reducing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an additional 150 million tonnes. For the woodworking industry to reach this goal, a predictable and understandable policy environment is needed. We therefore call on the EU institutions to:

## **Ensure a level playing field that supports the procurement and manufacturing of wood products**

The construction, packaging and furniture industries are the main end-users of wood products. For the woodworking industry to be able to contribute to job growth and economic revival of Europe, the industry must be able to compete with other materials on a level playing field based on appropriate and compatible regulatory structures. One example is the use of wood products in construction which faces fragmented and restrictive building codes and regulations across Member States. This discourages the use of wood and limits the economic and environmental benefits otherwise available.

We call upon the EU institutions to tackle such regulatory fragmentation and encourage Member States to effectively converge on good practice examples.

## **Support greater access to funding and support investment**

Global innovation should play a key role in Europe's re-industrialisation, but currently the EU is lagging behind North-America and Asia. The EU's research programmes should make Europe a hub for global innovation, but still today, SMEs, which make up the majority of the woodworking sector, face difficulties participating in the EU's research programmes.

We call on the EU institutions to further facilitate SMEs to take part in Horizon 2020 programmes while extending EU innovation programmes into the fields of sustainability, design, and business model innovation.

## **Avoid divergence within EU legislation and reduce administrative burdens**

The EU's growth strategy, Europe 2020, highlights the importance of improving the business environment through smart legislation and the reduction of administrative burdens. Although the EU has achieved significant progress in reducing regulatory burdens, more can be done. At present, EU climate and energy policies have contradictory objectives, especially when it comes to the use of wood. The climate policy should aim to support the long lifecycle of wood whereas at times it discourages its material use. On the other hand, the energy policy promotes the short lifecycle as bio-energy.

The woodworking industries make a major contribution in the realisation of climate and energy policies, and therefore strongly encourage the EU institutions to avoid any conflict in future legislation.

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## 2/ Environment & Climate Change

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Wood is naturally renewable, re-usable and recyclable. It can be used for a multitude of applications that have both environmental and economic advantages. Wood products offer a simple and natural way to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions causing global warming. Substituting fossil carbon-intensive products would play a key role in helping the EU achieve its environmental and climate change targets. We therefore call on the EU institutions to:

### **Encourage the increased use of wood in construction and in daily-life applications**

Using wood in construction, furniture and packaging offers the opportunity both to store carbon and to displace the use of fossil carbon-intensive materials. Every cubic metre of wood used as a substitute for other building materials reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an average of 1.1 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>. When combined with the 0.9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> stored in each cubic metre of wood, the total increases to 2 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>. Likewise, replacing other construction materials with wood would save about 30% primary energy in the manufacturing phase. A 10% increase in the wooden houses built in Europe would produce CO<sub>2</sub> savings to account for 25% of the reductions prescribed in the Kyoto Protocol.

We call upon the EU institutions to encourage the increased use of wood products (particularly in construction) as a means to mitigate climate change and encourage Member States to implement 'wood first' policies.

### **Prolong the life cycle of wood and optimise the use of wood to foster a resource efficient bio-based economy**

The environmental benefits of using wood products go beyond construction. Wood products act as a carbon sink and increasing the proportion of wood materials in use will have a direct impact on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. To maximise both the environmental and economic benefits arising from wood, efficient use has to be made of this valuable resource. Therefore the woodworking industry considers recycling an integral part of producing sustainable products.

We call upon the EU institutions to elaborate upon a European strategy that targets the higher mobilization and efficient use of wood across all sectors. Policies should acknowledge that in non-energy uses, wood is a carbon store.

### **Re-organise incentives to improve the total supply of wood as a raw material**

Forests are the basis for a sustainable European ecosystem and more must be done to increase the growth of Europe's forests and the supply of wood raw material. Whilst we support specific, selected fractions of woody biomass as a source of renewable energy, promotion measures applied to bio-energy production should not distort the wood markets by giving energy producers an unfair advantage in the procurement of wood that could also be suitable for material use. These incentives threaten Europe's wood supply base and lead to increased wood costs, which jeopardise the competitiveness of Europe's woodworking industries.

We call upon the EU institutions to redirect these incentives to support the increase of wood raw material supply to the whole forest-based sector.

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## 3/ Agriculture & Rural Development

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With over 56% of the EU population living in rural areas, the effective implementation of rural development policies is a key component for lowering unemployment levels and returning growth to Europe. Often located in remote and less industrialised areas, the European woodworking industry has long been a central player in rural communities supporting stable employment while encouraging investment. The continued development of the woodworking industry will help to avoid delocalisation across the EU and instead enhance the competitiveness of rural areas. We therefore call on the EU institutions to:

### **Encourage afforestation and reforestation across Europe**

In addition to enhancing harvesting of existing sustainably managed forests, the establishment of new woodlands will help to meet the increasing demand for wood grown and sourced in the EU. Moreover, the European concept of sustainably managed forests also includes carefully planned reforestation. The important role of the forest-based sector within the EU bio-economy and the need to provide more biomass from sustainably managed forests are essential to convince land owners to contribute to this endeavour by establishing new forests that represent a long term commitment.

The right EU policy framework and incentives should offer socio-economic conditions which make it attractive to be an active forest owner and/or an entrepreneur. The EU Rural Development funds should be used to support the creation of new woodland and for reforestation. Beside technical measures, activities in awareness raising and motivating land owners in establishing new forested areas have to be supported. Research on and implementation of new approaches to integrate increased biomass production with improved provision of other ecosystem services in the sustainable management of forests need political and financial assistance.

### **Avoid the leakage of raw materials without processing**

In the face of international free trade and open markets, Europe's rural areas face the imminent danger of the leakage of raw materials to 3rd countries for processing. The woodworking industry is no exception to this threat and faces the risk of becoming growers while losing the added value of processing. Continued raw material leakage threatens countless rural area jobs during a time when Europe can ill afford further job losses in rural areas.

We call on the EU institutions to develop amongst others stricter anti-dumping and anti-subsidy policies in an effort to protect jobs.



***MEPs are Encouraged  
to Join the ‘Club du Bois’***

# wood

FOR GROWTH

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