

Positive efforts on circular economy, but they must be realistic

Brussels, 16th June 2015 – Tomorrow the members of the ENVI Committee will vote on MEP Pietikäinen's own initiative report on "Resource efficiency: moving towards a circular economy". European small and medium construction enterprises, represented by the European Builders Confederation EBC, support a circular economy and are in favour of a better use of resource efficiency, as long as the right framework is in place.

Ahead of the vote, EBC Secretary General Riccardo Viaggi reminds MEPs that *"Even though the construction sector acknowledges the importance to go beyond energy efficiency and promote a more efficient use of resources through a circular economy, such an objective must be attained through feasible and cost effective measures. Several amendments propose a total ban on landfilling by 2030, which seems unrealistic. Much effort must be made to support recycling in the construction sector. Before setting strict targets and deadlines, a real market for recyclable products should be created"*.

Many amendments that have been tabled raise concerns among EBC members as they do not seem realistic. The proposal to add a 30% binding target on resource efficiency is not backed up by either impact assessments or stakeholders' consultation. This resource efficiency target is therefore not based on any scientific consideration. And since this is the case, it would only increase red tape at all levels with no significant results, which is also against the new European Commission goal of better regulation.

Regarding ecodesign, it is important to first ensure the implementation of existing legislation before broadening the scope of the directive. On this Riccardo Viaggi concluded *"Eco-design is not suitable for construction products. In fact, construction products do not stand alone and therefore their performance can only be assessed at the building level according to their installation and interaction with other products and systems"*.

- Ends -

Note to editors

Established in 1990, the European Builders Confederation - EBC - is a European professional organisation representing national associations of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises working in the construction sector. Through its national members, EBC represents 2 million construction microenterprises and SMEs. EBC is a member of UEAPME, on behalf of which it chairs the UEAPME Construction Forum.

The construction sector is of vital importance to the European economy. With 3 million enterprises, an annual turnover of around € 1600 billion and a total direct workforce of 13 million, the construction sector contributes at around 10% to the GDP of the European Union.

99.9% of the European construction sector is composed of small and medium-sized companies, which produce 80% of the construction industry's output. Small enterprises (less than 50 employees) are responsible for 60% of the production and employ 70% of the sector's working population.

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