

Izola, Slovenia, 15 October 2025

Wood sector driving Europe's affordable housing future: 4th WoodPoP High Level Meeting in Slovenia

The European Wood Policy Platform (WoodPoP) High-Level Meeting gathered leaders from across Europe, spotlighting the wood sector as a frontrunner in Europe's competitive transition.

The Wood4Bauhaus Alliance reaffirms the central role of the wood sector in driving Europe's transformation and applauds the European Commission's intention to develop a [European Strategy for Housing Construction](#) as part of the upcoming [European Affordable Housing Plan](#), a vital step to alleviate the housing affordability crisis. The WoodPop High-Level Meeting made a strong call to recognise the wood sector's role and invest in skills and education for making Europe's workforce fit for a more competitive future economy based on green resources and circularity.

With 17.5 million jobs linked to regional value chains, the wood sector is vital for rural and urban economies and boosts a strong innovation ecosystem that drives competitiveness and higher productivity in construction, leading the digital green transition in the building sector. Wood is the most important natural, renewable and climate-friendly material enabling to turn the building stock into a carbon sink. Timber buildings are showcases of long-term carbon sinks that boost health and wellbeing and are thus key to providing better housing and simultaneously cutting carbon emissions. The European wood sector is a global leader in resilient growth of innovative SMEs from domestic forest resources.

To create the right framework conditions for increasing the supply of both new and renovated housing across Europe, [Wood4Bauhaus](#) proposes the following three key recommendations to ensure that Europe can meet its affordability and sustainability imperatives:

1. Set in motion a wave of new and sustainable construction including natural, renewable and climate-friendly materials in Europe to generate transformative growth;
2. Accelerate the renovation wave and recognise the crucial role of new buildings in tackling the growing housing shortage;
3. Mainstream industrialised construction in conjunction with circular bio-based materials and skills development to enhance productivity and competitiveness of the construction ecosystem.

The European Commission should work to ensure that the Strategy for Housing Construction delivers not just more homes, but also sustainable construction, affordable homes and quality jobs for all workers. The European wood sector has unique strengths in biobased, circular, carbon-storing materials and efficient prefabrication systems for both new built and retrofitting.

It thus offers multiple opportunities for upscaling and growth in domestic and international markets, which can be further unlocked by the Strategy. To do so the Strategy needs to be closely linked to other initiatives such as the *Quality Jobs Roadmap*, *Fair Mobility Package* and the proposal for a *Revision of the Public Procurement*, among others.

1. Investing in Skills and Education: Developing a skilled workforce is essential for Europe's green and digital transitions and requires closer cooperation between businesses, education providers and social partners. Key steps are to strengthen vocational education and training (VET) systems, to expand Erasmus+ opportunities for apprenticeships, and to promote lifelong learning for adult workers. Securing and enhancing Europe's world-class skill and education systems through increased European collaboration and funding is a top priority.
2. Promoting quality jobs: Investing in attractive career paths and good working conditions supporting fair labour practices will enable the sector meet future challenges.
3. Support for Social Dialogue: Strengthening and encouraging social dialogue at all levels is key to ensuring inclusive decision-making.



Pictures: 1) Wood4Bauhaus Alliance partners at the WoodPoP High-level meeting in Izola, Slovenia - from left to right: Kris Wijnendaele (EPF), Mike Burnard (InnovaWood), François Sougne (CEI-Bois), Andreja Kutnar (InnoRenew CoE); 2) High-level meeting group picture; © InnoRenew CoE, 15/10/2025

The Wood4Bauhaus Alliance

Wood4Bauhaus represents the European industry, research and innovation ecosystem around wood-based materials and engineered products for construction. The Alliance's main objective is to shape a better and sustainable future with beautiful, healthy and inclusive living, working, and learning spaces as part of a sustainable, low carbon-built environment. Our platform fosters an open, cross-disciplinary dialogue with all interested stakeholders and helps share good practices related to the Circular Economy and Green Buildings. Our goal is to inspire as many actors as possible to co-create contributions to the **New European Bauhaus (NEB)** from European to regional and local level, all in the common interest to advance and exploit as much as possible the potential of nature-based materials, innovative building systems and digital solutions to mitigate climate harm and foster well-being of European citizens. The Alliance will therefore:

- Encourage research and innovation for novel and innovative uses of wood in the built environment,
- Foster new collaborations and co-creation between different stakeholders across disciplines, sectors, and society, and
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and skills development especially towards future generations.

The Wood4Bauhaus Alliance comprises the following partners:

InnovaWood is the European network for wood science, research, innovation and education with more than 60 member organisations in 28 countries, including RTOs, universities, VET centres and cluster organisations, representing a large community invested in EU research around sustainable materials.

The **European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)** is an umbrella organisation of 21 European and national organisations from 15 countries backing the interests of the entire wood sector.

The **European Panel Federation (EPF)** represents 100,000 direct jobs and counts more than 5,000 wood-based panel manufacturing and furniture companies in 25 countries.

The **European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS)** represents 35,000 sawmills in 12 countries.

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.

InnoRenew CoE is an interdisciplinary institute at the University of Primorska in Slovenia combining material science, biology, engineering, ICT, human health, design, and social sciences to drive sustainable innovation of the wood and constructions sectors.



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