

European Federation
of Building
and Woodworkers



**Indicative Work Programme for the
Sectoral European Social Dialogue of the
Woodworking Industries**

2022-2023

Introduction

The Social Partners, the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) and the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois) believe in the importance of a strong and autonomous European social dialogue for the woodworking sectors for a sustainable and prospering woodworking industry. The social partners will continue to strengthen their collaboration to sustain this.

On the European level and in the framework of their joint initiatives, EFBWW and CEI-Bois will consider the repartition of responsibilities between the European and National level and will respect the role and autonomy of the national social partners in determining their labour market and terms and conditions of employment by themselves.

This two-year working programme serves as a guideline for the activities of the European social partners of the woodworking sectors for the years 2022-2023. However, this working program constitutes a non-exhaustive framework for possible topics of interest between EFBWW and CEI-Bois and may, according to the developments in the EU agenda be updated to better fit the needs of the woodworking industry.

During this period the EFBWW and CEI-Bois will strive to cooperate on the development of skills for the Woodworking Industry, but also improve the attractiveness and visibility of the sector as well as to follow-up to their joint actions, statements, and projects.

Main priorities for the period 2022-2023

Industrial policies, Circular Economy, and the Green Deal

On 10 March 2020, the Commission adopted a new Industrial Strategy to help Europe's industry lead the green and digital transformations and to drive Europe's competitiveness and sovereignty. The update of the EU Industrial Strategy highlights the need to promote an inclusive recovery from the pandemic and further accelerate the green and digital transitions in line with the EU Green Deal and Digital Decade and increase the resilience of EU industrial ecosystems.

Wood is the solution! When talking about a greening economy or a circular economy, the consumption of renewable raw material, energy consumption or the efficient way to use raw material are paramount. In this respect, forestry and the forest-based industries play a significant role, today and in the future. The Communication of the European Union's Green Deal (COM[2019]640) also underlines this prominent role. Beside the task of delivering raw material, our sectors provide new type of material for various sectors and industries, amongst other in the construction industry.

Changes in the demand due to the “greening” of the economy and jobs represent, on the one hand, a significant opportunity for the woodworking sectors regarding the creation of new jobs. On the other hand, they will also have an impact on the organisation of work (new market opportunities, new skills needed, etc.) and on working conditions (additional/new training, adapted Health and Safety conditions, etc.).

EFBWW and CEI-Bois are committed to continue to address these issues in the framework of their joint activities and to reflect the voice of workers and companies more closely in the debate on a strengthened competitiveness of the forestry and woodworking sectors at national, European and international level.

In addition, SP will resume the promoting of use of wood in construction within the European wood-based sector Wood4Bauhaus Alliance of which both Social Partners are Members.

Training & Education, Skills, and Attractiveness

The demographic changes and in particular the ageing of the population and the workforce, combined with the difficulties observed in several Member States to attract and maintain young people in the woodworking sectors, remain a challenge, both for companies and for workers.

EFBWW and CEI-Bois will address the impact of such demographic developments from the various angles of its components (image of the sector, health and safety, employment issues, etc.) by gathering examples of national best practice and identifying potential topics for action at the EU level.

Following the announcement made by President von der Leyen in her 2021 State of the Union address, the Commission proposed to make 2022 the European Year of Youth. Europe needs the vision, engagement, and participation of all young people to build a better future, that is greener, more inclusive and digital. With the European Year of Youth, the Commission intends, in cooperation with the European Parliament, Member States, regional and local authorities, stakeholders and young people themselves:

- to honour and support the generation that has sacrificed the most during the pandemic;
- to encourage all young people, especially those with fewer opportunities, from disadvantaged backgrounds, from rural or remote areas, or belonging to vulnerable groups, to become active citizens and actors of positive change;
- to promote opportunities provided by EU policies for young people to support their personal, social and professional development;
- to draw inspiration from the actions, vision and insights of young people to further strengthen and invigorate the common EU project, building upon the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Within the Woodworking Sector and despite the efforts of member countries but also the EU, employment prospects for young people in the EU are grim. One in five under 25 years old who is looking for work cannot find a job. Approximately 7.5 million young people between 15 and 24 are neither working, nor in education or training.

In addition, in most Member States the woodworking sectors are still suffering from a relatively negative image which affects its attractiveness and which, to some extent, explains the difficulties in hiring and retaining young people as well as skilled workers.

Therefore, EFBWW and CEI-Bois will work towards improving the attractiveness of the wood industry towards young people, which in turn can provide an important contribution in fighting against high levels of youth unemployment that the EU is facing nowadays.

In all EU Member States the woodworking industries face changes in the use of technology and new work processes, often summarized under the title Digitalisation. Those changes effect work process, the work organisation and needed skills and competences of workers. In turn companies partly find it difficult to find workers with the appropriate skills. In consequence, today, skills gaps are already recognized as a major challenge in many sectors, including in the renovation and construction of buildings. Addressing the issue of anticipation of skills needs is important both for the competitiveness of woodworking companies, as well as for employment in the sector.

Upskilling workforce with green and digital skills is essential. The acquisition of the right skills is the prerequisite to make the successful transition to a climate neutral Europe. Managing those processes successfully will also increase the attractiveness of the woodworking sectors for young persons and can contribute to the development of our rural areas.

EFBWW and CEI-Bois will work to develop actions and promoting increased attractiveness of our sectors as well supporting apprenticeships amongst woodworking companies of all sizes both quantitatively and qualitatively, through the creation of strong partnership involving employers, trade unions, VET institutes as well as local or regional authorities. SP will also explore joint actions in the framework of the Pact for Skills and other ongoing EU initiatives aiming at helping to address and reduce the skills gap, though information sharing, best practices exchange etc.

Health & Safety

The Commission published the new EU Strategic Framework on occupational safety and health (OSH) 2021-2027 on the 28 of June 2021. The strategic framework recognises that the EU and national regulatory systems on OSH are well advanced and that, in combination with the tripartite approach, this has led to significant progress in OSH over the last decades.

The document states that although the priorities of the previous framework remain relevant today further OSH action in the EU is needed to make the workplaces fit for the increasingly rapid changes in the economy, demography, work patterns, and society at large. The COVID19 pandemic has accentuated these complexities and made OSH and public health policy more inter-related than ever before.

The strategic framework focuses on three crosscutting key objectives for the coming years:

1. anticipating and managing change in the new world of work brought about by the green, digital and demographic transitions;
2. improving prevention of workplace accidents and illnesses;

3. increasing preparedness for any potential future health crises.

To deliver on these objectives, action is needed at EU, national, sectoral, and company level. The implementation of these three objectives will be underpinned by: social dialogue; strengthening of the evidence base; strengthening of enforcement; awareness raising; and funding.

Despite the overall reduction in the number of work-related accidents, improving health and safety in the workplace continues to be an important field of action for the woodworking sectors. More attention towards the problem of occupational diseases is especially requested.

The Social Partners of the woodworking sector share the commitment to policy and practices for healthy and safe workplaces. Work should promote employee safety, growth, and goal attainment. SP will monitor and explore areas for cooperation on the follow up initiatives of the current Strategic Framework.

Improving the functioning of the labour market

Just like most industries, the woodworking industries has been hit significantly by the crisis, which is still affecting many Member States. Therefore, ensuring a level playing field for companies and protecting them against social fraud is a goal shared by the social partners.

The social partners recognize that the fight against criminal actions, as often social fraud is, is a task for the governmental agencies, both on national and EU level, and the police. The social partners will spread information to companies and people in general concerning the risk of social fraud and assist the governmental agencies with information should they require information.

Where appropriate, the established European Labour Authority (ELA) can offer support in partnership with the various actors concerned, i.e. social partners, labour inspectorates, national authorities and social funds.

Strengthening industrial relations

Performing industrial relations are a major element of a level playing field for economic activities. Shaping working conditions in all its aspects by joint agreements is a cornerstone in this respect and the best guarantee to avoid and to fight competition by wage dumping or other kind of dumping related to working conditions.

EFBWW and CEI-Bois support the strengthening of autonomous industrial relations within the woodworking sectors. They also reaffirm the primary responsibility of the national sectoral social partners, through autonomous industrial relations, for finding a common understanding about the organisation of their national labour market.

CEI-Bois and the EFBWW will continue to support the establishment of autonomous sectoral industrial relation systems for the woodworking sectors in all the Member States and in this respect.

The following annex is tabling the specific planned activities, also indicating aims, responsibilities, and timing.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE WOOD - Work programme 2022-2023

Policy Area	Topic	Aim	Period	Responsible
Industrial policies, Circular Economy, and the Green Deal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Influencing the EU initiatives and policies in the wood industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The general aim is to jointly define an industry policy for the various covered sectors 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secretariats / Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wood4Bauhaus & Renovation Wave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to promote the use of wood in construction within the European wood-based sector Wood4Bauhaus Alliance of which both Social Partners are Members. Wood is an extremely versatile material, and a circular material par excellence. Long-life products using wood can store carbon for decades or even centuries in buildings and living spaces. The wood4bauhaus alliance was accepted and confirmed by the European Commission as an official partner of the new European Bauhaus on the 30 of March 2021. ▪ As the EU building stock is the largest single energy consumer in Europe with 40% of energy consumption and 36% of EU GHG emissions, the 'renovation wave' initiative is the occasion for promoting wood and wood-based products, for their sustainable and environmentally friendly features. To achieve net zero CO2 emissions by 2050, construction must rapidly decarbonise while 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secretariats / Working Group/ Wood4Bauhaus Alliance

		responding to the needs of a growing urban population, the increasing demand for new buildings and has to manage the urgent requirement to renovate existing buildings. Wood-based solutions offer a green construction material that is renewable, recyclable and has a low fossil carbon footprint. Making responsibly sourced wood the first-choice material for building products is the simplest and quickest way to ensure that the construction industry and the built environment reduce their CO2 emissions.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for scenarios for a transition pathway for a resilient, greener, and more digital construction ecosystem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission proposes a collaborative process with stakeholders – that includes Member States, industry, social partners, and academia – to identify and co-design the way forward: a transition pathway for industrial ecosystems. Priority is given to the industrial ecosystems that face the most important challenges and have been most heavily affected by the crisis. One of these ecosystems is construction. The transition pathway resulting from this process would identify the milestones for the transition period, the actions required by different stakeholders and the costs and challenges along the way. Social Partners will monitor and explore possible common interest for collaboration 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse activities linked to Circular Economy, Ecodesign Directive: e.g. Sustainable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Partners will monitor and explore possible common interest for collaboration. 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariats / Working Group

	initiative, Sustainable consumption of goods – promoting repair and reuse etc...)			
Training & Education, Skills and Attractiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EU policies in the area of VET, including the “A pact for Skills” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparing a conference on VET perspectives for our sectors together with the Furniture sector ▪ Monitoring the implementation and results of existing project of interest for our industry and collaborating with them when appropriate– e.g Project ALLVIEW (https://allview.eu) ▪ Observing EU policies in the area / improving our capacity to influence on the European level ▪ Identification of the future needs of the EU’s timber industry ▪ Call for high-quality vocational training in eco-construction. ▪ Advocating for a lifelong learning, qualifications and skills recognition /Inclusive access to education and training: creating the conditions for equality of opportunities and success; digital learning ▪ Exploring opportunities for a dedicated social partner actions on the topic of “Skills, education, and training” in the Woodworking industry, including attracting and retaining young/skilled workers – e.g joint Conference/webinars 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secretariats/ Working party
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demographic changes / Aging Workforce in the woodworking industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint project: ResilientWood (<i>pending approval by the EC; expected to begin in 2022 and last 24 months</i>) It aims to help fostering cross boarder collaboration and the attractiveness of the sector. The project aims to offer a starting point for the 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secretariats / Working Group

		<p>identification of the skill needs of the sector, as well as the anticipation of problems in the labour demand/supply dynamics. At a second stage thematic workshops will be organised to discuss specific challenges of the industry and possible suggestions for remedial measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving working conditions and the attractiveness of the sector 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for environmental sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor existing proposal and exploring joint actions (position paper, PR, publications) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariats / Working Group
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission published the new EU Strategic Framework on occupational safety and health (OSH) 2021-2027New Community strategy on OSH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring joint social partner position (<i>e.g. Joint Social Partner Statement together with the Furniture Sector EFIC</i>) Monitoring and engaging where necessary on the follow up initiatives 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFBWW/CEI-Bois/EFIC Secretariats / Plenary meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood Dust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion the possibility of updating the joint brochure "Less Dust" 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariats/ Working Party
Industrial Relations and the Labour Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for national affiliated organisations to improve their capacity for Social Dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting information about the respective national situation and giving support 	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariats

European Federation
of Building
and Woodworkers



**European Federation of
Building and Woodworkers**

EFBWW

Rue Royale 45
B – 1000 Brussels

Tel.: +32 2 227 10 40
E-mail: info@efbww.eu
<http://www.efbww.eu>



**European Confederation of
Woodworking Industries**

CEI-BOIS

Rue Montoyer 24
BE-1000 Brussels

Tel.: +32 2 556 25 85
E-mail: info@cei-bois.org
www.cei-bois.org