

# Let's build a more efficient Europe

Europe's industrial strategy must combine decarbonisation and circularity while acknowledging the principles of economic development and maintain a level playing field. Construction is the backbone of the EU economy and will play an important role in this transition if, together, we:



## Deliver a material-neutral built environment strategy

The transition to a circular and carbon-neutral economy requires the involvement of entire value chains to encompass both supply and demand. This is especially true in the highly diverse construction sector. We need a European policy framework to stimulate the uptake of low-carbon, innovative and circular solutions for the construction, renovation and replacement of existing structures. This framework must be based on technology and material neutrality, lifecycle performance and be embedded in large-scale investment programmes.

## Invest in affordable housing and resilient infrastructure

The ageing of infrastructure and the availability of affordable housing impact on the quality of life and employment prospects of citizens. Investments in housing and infrastructure through European structural and investment funds and the European Investment Bank, will allow us to achieve sustainable development goals, that include growth, resilience to climate change and improved quality of life.



## Develop skilled labour

Our industry offers many great employment opportunities, but a potential shortage of skilled labour is a significant concern. The construction industry being one Europe's largest employer, "digital construction" must become a priority for the New Skills Agenda for Europe and the Digitising European Industry initiatives.

An innovative, digital and competitive construction sector will bring considerable benefits to Europe's citizens, environment and economy. Let's put societal needs at the heart of institutional priorities for the period 2019-2024.

The construction industry is the backbone of the EU economy. Indeed, the sector represents close to 43 million direct or indirect jobs, which equates to 6.4% of total employment or 28.9% of industrial employment. Moreover, in 2017 construction delivered €104.9 billion in annual turnover, which is equivalent to 8.6% of the EU Gross Domestic Product, the highest share of any industry. Lastly, it is estimated that the industry is made up of approximately 3.3 million companies, including world leading companies headquartered in the EU and 95% of SMEs.