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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Presentation by the European Construction Industry Federation (agenda item 2) at the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (High Level) on 07 May 2026

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Delegations will find attached a presentation by the European Construction Industry Federation, with a view to the discussion by the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (High Level) at its meeting on 07 May 2026.

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# High Level Group on Competitiveness and Growth

7 May 2026 - Brussels



# European Strategy for Housing Construction



## Digitalisation of building permit procedures

- Towards full digital transformation
- Clear timelines, accountability and transparency in decision-making

## Accelerating standardisation and innovation uptake

- Boosting innovation uptake by development of standards

## Financing and public procurement

- Need for a shift towards performance-based procurement, quality criteria and support for industrialised/modular construction

## Labour shortages and skills gaps

- Increasing availability of skilled workforce in construction
- Facilitating labour mobility within the EU



# The "Single Market Strategy" and the "Construction Services Act"



## Construction is NOT like other sectors

Local

Majority of SMEs  
operating at regional/national level

Large firms establish local subsidiaries  
rather than operate cross-border

## Barriers to cross-border activity

Complex administrative systems

Lack of accessible information

Obstacles related to  
qualifications, social security  
coordination, language



# The "Single Market Strategy" and the "Construction Services Act"



Building  
the change

## Clear red lines

- High-risk sector
- Strict requirements on H&S, skills, qualifications
- Result of long-standing social dialogue
- Any EU initiative must not lead to lower national standards

## National frameworks must remain central

- Construction activities intrinsically linked to national and regional regulations
- Ensuring quality, safety and consumer protection
- Full harmonisation simply NOT feasible
- Need for better transparency and easier access to information

## Mutual recognition of skills and qualifications

- Simplified, more efficient and faster procedures
- While standardisation can offer benefits it must remain voluntary and involve social partners

## Access to insurance

- Improving the recognition of insurance policies across Member States
- clear EU added value

## Key principle

- **Build on what exists**
- **Respect national systems**
- **Focus on concrete and workable solutions**



# (Regulatory) Simplification



Building  
the change

## Simplification

- Omnibus on sustainability reporting → step in the right direction

## Cost pressures and resilience

- High and volatile material costs
- Increasing regulatory requirements
- Essential to strengthen Europe's industrial resilience

## Project delivery

- One of the biggest bottlenecks:  
complex and lengthy permitting procedures
- Need for simpler permitting processes, clear deadlines and legal certainty
- Planning rules supporting both renovation and new construction





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# Thank you!

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