The Federation of the European Precast Concrete Industry

BIBM EU Manifesto 2024 – 2029

Building a Sustainable Future with Precast Concrete

We, the members of the **Federation of the European Precast Concrete Industry (BIBM)**, are united in our commitment to advancing sustainable construction practices, economic growth, and innovation. Hereby, we present this manifesto as a vision for the European Union's engagement, recognising the pivotal role precast concrete plays in shaping the built environment. We advocate for policies that foster collaboration, sustainability, and resilience.

Our Vision: We envision precast concrete at the forefront of sustainable construction, driving economic development, enhancing infrastructure resilience, and minimising the environmental footprint of the built environment, as stated in our recently published BIBM Decarbonisation Pledge.

As a new EU political cycle begins, BIBM aims to highlight its critical priorities for the next five years and urges European institutions to incorporate them into their legislative agenda.

1. *Provide housing, buildings and infrastructure at the service of the society*

Resilience: Precast concrete, known for its durability, offers resilient solutions against floods, storms, and other natural disasters. Its modular construction minimises weather risks, enabling tailored solutions like flood-resistant barriers. With low maintenance and lasting performance, it reduces post-disaster costs. Given the rising **significance of climate adaptation policies**, precast concrete plays a crucial role in building resilient infrastructure. We advocate for increased investment in climate-resilient projects.

Affordability: The built environment needs to be affordable by European citizens to be truly sustainable. The precast concrete industry can deliver cost-effective solutions throughout the whole life cycle while addressing the changing needs of the society. Policies should include economic assessments and become **enablers of transformation** rather than administrative burdens.

Energy efficiency: There's an urgent need to view buildings not merely as passive energy absorbers, but rather as active contributors to the energy system by utilising embedded thermal energy. EU policies should focus on transforming buildings into entities that contribute energy to the grid and facilitate the integration of diverse energy sources, including renewables. Concrete, leveraging its **thermal mass** (activation), plays a pivotal role in realising this objective.

Fire safety: Ensuring fire safety in European buildings is a top priority. Concrete's inherent strength and resilience are crucial for protecting lives and property from fire hazards. We advocate for establishing structural coordination of all EU Commission initiatives related to fire safety of buildings and for an **EU-wide fire safety strategy**, as outlined in the Fire Safety EU Manifesto 2024-2029.

2. *Achieve the Green Deal objectives through a sound Industrial Strategy*

Sustainability: We are committed to promoting and adopting sustainable and modern practices throughout the whole life cycle of precast concrete products, from raw material extraction to production, transportation, and end-of-life reuse and recycling. Achieving

these goals requires EU policies to be both **material and technology-neutral**, establishing clear goals and common methodologies based on full life cycle analysis using up-to-date data. This ensures that all materials can compete fairly in contributing to the sustainable built environment.

Circular Economy: Embracing the principles of a circular economy, we advocate for policies that encourage long service life as well as the reuse, recycling, and repurposing of precast concrete elements and structures. The EU should work towards creating a regulatory environment that promotes circularity by minimising input and output of materials and energy, reducing landfilling of recyclable construction and demolition waste (CDW), and developing optimal policies for recycled materials. Establishing end-of-waste criteria for construction materials and recycled content **based on availability and performance** is essential.

Resource efficiency: Aligned with EU policies, precast concrete minimises material usage while achieving equivalent functional objectives, advancing sustainable construction practices. Formed in reusable moulds and cured in controlled conditions, it offers durability, strength, and design flexibility, excelling in resource efficiency. By **reducing material usage**, this precise manufacturing process minimises waste and environmental impact.

3. Create the framework to build for the future

Modernisation of the built environment: Enhancing sustainability in building modernisation involves improving energy efficiency, integrating renewable energy, and adopting green practices. Precast concrete aims to play a crucial role in this transformation by incorporating cutting-edge technologies during building upgrades. Furthermore, technological advancements drive construction towards sustainability, prompting stakeholders to consider rebuilding and renovating. Rebuilding offers sustainability alongside renovation. Stakeholders must assess factors, **use life cycle assessment and life cycle costing**, and ensure impartial assessment for equitable support.

Innovation and Research: We advocate for increased funding and collaboration in research and development (R&D) to develop advanced technologies, materials, and construction methods that improve the efficiency, durability, and sustainability of precast concrete. As current partners in two Horizon Europe projects (RISKADAPT, Exploit4InnoMat), we call on the EU to **support R&D initiatives** targeting a further reduction in the concrete carbon footprint.

Regulatory framework: We urge the EU to facilitate the development of a stable regulatory framework including harmonised standards for precast concrete products across member states. A **common, stable framework** will enhance market access, improve quality assurance, and foster cross-border collaboration within the precast concrete industry.

Digitalisation: We support the integration of digital technologies in the precast concrete industry. The EU should invest in the development and implementation of smart manufacturing processes, advanced automation, **Building Information Modelling (BIM)**, and Product Data Templates (PDT) to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and improve overall project outcomes.

Conclusion

This manifesto serves as a **collaborative call to action** for the European Commission, Member States, industry stakeholders across the construction value chain, and the broader community to discuss the best possible sustainable practices in construction for shaping resilient future (for more information about our industry, please refer to our publication: "The Little Green Book of Concrete – Sustainable Construction with Precast Concrete"). By working together in an open dialogue, we can build a Europe that stands as a global leader in innovative and sustainable construction practices.

BIBM
Secretariat: rue d'Arlon 55 – B-1040 Brussels – Belgium
email: info@bibm.eu website: https://bibm.eu/