

CEMENT SECTOR SIGNALS URGENCY AND CALLS FOR CONDITIONS TO UNLOCK INVESTMENT IN EUROPE

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Europe's cement industry welcomed this week's high-level Sectoral Dialogue with the European Commission. The meeting brought together CEOs of European cement companies with the Commissioner for Climate Action, Wopke Hoekstra, who hosted the meeting, and the Commissioner for the Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, Jessika Roswall, alongside senior Commission representatives and other stakeholders. The level of engagement demonstrated a shared willingness to move forward together on the competitiveness conditions that will enable the sector to advance its transition in Europe.

With more than 200 plants supporting 14.5 million jobs across the construction value chain, cement and concrete remain essential to housing, infrastructure, clean energy systems and defence. The sector continues to advance more than 120 decarbonisation projects across Europe under its 2050 Roadmap, but each investment depends on a viable business case – the focus of the [Cement Action Plan](#).

Ensuring effective carbon pricing (ETS/CBAM): at the meeting, the cement sector reaffirmed its support for the EU ETS as a market-based instrument that can incentivise CO₂ reductions. Cement Europe CEOs made it very clear however, that continued ETS support is strongly conditional on a fully effective CBAM and long-term business planning certainty as part of the upcoming EU ETS review.

Accelerating progress on energy: structurally high electricity prices erode the cement industry's competitiveness in Europe and electricity demand is expected to increase 2- to 5-times as decarbonisation projects are deployed at scale. Suggestions were discussed for targeted measures that could be taken in the short term to mitigate the impact on the production cost. On thermal energy, co-processing was stressed as a major energy lever that enables cement sites to reduce their exposure to the volatility of fossil fuel markets while decreasing the European Union's reliance on energy imports. Continued access to waste without unnecessary administrative burdens and on a level regulatory playing field with incinerators are essential.

Participants further insisted on the need for improved energy interconnection networks and a rapid roll-out of CO₂ transport and storage infrastructure.



Scaling up funding for decarbonisation: the discussion focused on a design of the Industrial Decarbonisation Bank which offers an opportunity to frontload future ETS revenues for Annex I sectors in proportion to their contribution, turn the Innovation Fund into a Deployment Fund allowing deployment at scale and include de-risking schemes such as Contracts for Difference developed at European level.

Developing lead markets for low carbon products: with price still being the only selection criterion in many public tenders across Europe, the Industrial Accelerator Act is an important initiative to boost demand for low carbon products. The cement sector expressed support for binding EU targets for low carbon cements observing that the suggested 5% threshold could be higher if applied to near-zero and lower carbon products. It further called for public procurement rules to be aligned with CO₂ performance criteria at building level and product standards to be updated faster while keeping track of technological achievements.

Transition enablers: Cement Europe stressed the importance of taking the workforce along in the transition and continues its valued partnership with the European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW), building on findings from their joint EU-funded study on the sector's future reskilling needs.

Simplification: Finally the sector urged continued progress on regulatory simplification, with legislation that is clear in its objectives, proportionate in its implementation, and delivers predictable outcomes on the ground.

Jon Morrish, President, Cement Europe, said:

“Climate ambition and competitiveness must advance together. Our sector can invest at scale, but only with a CBAM that works, predictable ETS rules, action on energy prices, and the funding and CO₂ infrastructure needed to bring projects to final investment. With these conditions, the sector can deliver Europe's transition.”

Koen Coppenholle, CEO, Cement Europe, said:

“The Sectoral Dialogue highlighted the need for a strengthened partnership between cement industry and EU institutions. We welcome this engagement and the clear recognition of cement's strategic role with a value chain strongly rooted in Europe. Our sector is ready to deliver, and we look forward to working with policymakers to turn Europe's industrial and climate ambitions into concrete results.”

NOTES FOR EDITORS

[Cement Europe](#) is the voice of the cement industry in Europe. Based in Brussels, we represent national cement associations and companies across the European Union (except Malta), as well as Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Serbia is an Associate Member, and we cooperate closely with partners in Cyprus and Ukraine.

Please click to view the [Cement Europe's Net Zero Roadmap](#), the [Cement Action Plan](#) and the [map of innovation projects](#).

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