

THE BRAGA DECLARATION

Modernising Construction: Engineering Europe's Sustainable, Resilient and Digital Future

Adopted on: 19 June 2026

Location: Braga, Portugal

Occasion: 82nd ECCE General Meeting



THE BRAGA DECLARATION

We, the European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE), representing national civil engineering associations across 24 European nations, gather in Braga, Portugal, from 18–20 June 2026, on the occasion of our 82nd General Meeting.

Recognising that civil engineers stand at the absolute heart of society, bridging professional excellence with public safety, welfare, and quality of life, we affirm our collective responsibility to advance a sustainable, resilient, and structurally sound built environment across Europe while aggressively shielding the natural environment from escalating global climate threats.

Europe is facing profound challenges. Climate change, ageing infrastructure, housing affordability, resource constraints, demographic shifts and rapid technological transformation require coordinated and forward-looking responses. At the same time, innovation, digitalisation and emerging technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to improve the way we plan, design, construct and manage the built environment.

Civil engineers stand at the forefront of this transformation. Through their expertise, professional responsibility and commitment to the public interest, they contribute directly to the safety, wellbeing and sustainable development of society.

The Braga Declaration builds upon ECCE's recent initiatives including the ECCE Manifesto on Climate, Resilience and Infrastructure, the ECCE–ECEC Joint Policy Paper on Safe and Affordable Housing, and the AIDE Position Paper on Artificial Intelligence for a Digital and Ethical Civil Engineering.

Through this Declaration, ECCE calls upon European institutions, national governments, industry, academia and professional organisations to work together in advancing the following priorities:

01 SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Sustainability and resilience must become fundamental principles guiding the development of infrastructure and the built environment.

ECCE supports policies and investments that promote low-carbon construction, circular economy principles, resource efficiency, climate adaptation and whole-life asset management, ensuring that infrastructure remains fit for future generations.

02 MODERNISATION OF CONSTRUCTION

The construction sector must accelerate its transformation through innovation, digitalisation and industrialisation.

ECCE supports the wider adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM), Digital Twins, Modern Methods of Construction, smart infrastructure systems, automation and other technologies that improve quality, productivity, safety and sustainability while maintaining the central role of engineering judgement.

03 SAFE, AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Access to safe, affordable and sustainable housing is a fundamental societal objective.

Digital design tools, BIM, Digital Twins and Modern Methods of Construction can significantly improve housing delivery while maintaining safety, quality and sustainability standards.

ECCE calls for housing policies that increase supply, improve quality and affordability, promote sustainability and resilience, and place citizens and communities at the centre of decision-making. Civil engineers must play a key role in delivering practical and scalable housing solutions across Europe.

04 RESPONSIBLE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence have the potential to significantly enhance engineering practice, infrastructure management and decision-making throughout the built environment.

Their deployment must remain transparent, accountable, ethical and human-centred. Engineering judgement, professional responsibility and public safety must remain at the core of all technology-assisted decision-making processes.

ECCE supports the AIDE framework for the responsible adoption of Artificial Intelligence in civil engineering, founded upon the principles of Accountability, Innovation, Data Integrity and Ethics.

ECCE calls for the responsible governance of Artificial Intelligence and emerging digital technologies, ensuring transparency, accountability, human oversight and compliance with ethical and regulatory principles. Technological innovation must strengthen, rather than replace, professional judgement and public trust.

05 PEOPLE, SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Europe's future depends on a highly skilled and diverse engineering workforce.

ECCE calls for continued investment in engineering education, lifelong learning, digital skills, professional development and the active engagement of young engineers. Strengthening collaboration between academia, industry and professional organisations is essential to ensuring the future competitiveness of Europe.

THE BRAGA COMMITMENT

Through this Declaration, ECCE commits to promoting engineering excellence, sustainability, innovation, ethical leadership and international cooperation in support of the public interest.

ECCE will continue to advice and work with European and international partners to advance policies and initiatives and evidence- based recommendations that contribute to a safer, more resilient, more sustainable and more prosperous Europe.

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The Braga Declaration signed on 19 June 2026 in Braga

Platonas STYLIANOU

President ECCE

The European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE) established in 1985, is the voice of civil engineers in Europe, representing professional bodies from 25 member countries. It was founded on the belief that civil engineers working together can significantly contribute to advancing the built environment and protecting the natural one. ECCE promotes the highest technical and ethical standards, advises European and national institutions, and works to harmonize regulations and standards across Europe. Active in areas such as sustainability, education, ethics, and safety, ECCE supports civil engineers in building a better, more resilient future for all.

www.ecceengineers.eu

Fernando DE ALMEIDA SANTOS

President OEP

The Ordem dos Engenheiros de Portugal (OEP) is the public law professional association that represents engineers in Portugal and exclusively awards the professional title of Engineer; registration is mandatory to practice the profession. Created on November 24, 1936, the OEP is independent from State bodies and has administrative, financial, scientific, disciplinary, and regulatory autonomy. The OEP is organized territorially into Regions, ensuring national coverage through its network of District Offices, providing local services to their members. It represents all disciplines in Engineering and is organized into 17 Colleges of Specialization and 33 Specializations.

www.ordemdosengenheiros.pt