

COVID-19 Pandemic: EDA recommends Safety First

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The European Demolition Association, EDA, issues this statement addressed to Public Authorities, to customers, stakeholders and to our own industry, including the activities of demolition, decontamination and recycling.

The stage and response to this pandemic are very diverse in Europe. Most European countries have advised specific protective measures, which also apply to our trade, without stopping strategic operations.

As the work of our industry is, generally, related with the construction process, EDA supports the statement and requests made by the European Construction Industry Federation, FIEC, to the European Commission in support of the construction industry.

Representing the activities of demolition, decontamination and recycling, EDA and its National Associations encourage our industry to follow all the recommendations and implement the protective measures proposed by the health organizations, most specially those coming from the national or regional authorities.

Most of our workers need to go to the job site every day, travel there, do their work, eat and then come back again to their families, whom probably were at home following the confinement instructions.

Due to the location of the job sites, or to the current restrictions on transport, workers often need to share transport means to reach their work center. Add to these issues the problem of not having access to basic personal protective equipment, to protect our workers, spare parts and consumables, for regular maintenance of equipment, and logistics issues, to transfer materials to other locations for the following operations, and it is utterly difficult to have all the job sites working as they should.

We understand that every job site, every contract and even the rules and regulations in each Member State are different. And we also understand that our industry works on significantly diverse scenarios. But most of our operations are planned, as one step in a process to redevelop a building, structure or site.

EDA recommends Safety First, to protect the health of our workers and their families, following the advice of Public Authorities, to prevent the spread of the disease.

Suspending operations immediately for an unknown period will have a great impact, in many ways: social, economic, delays, contracts, ... but what is the impact of continuing operations and exposing everyone to the health risk? It is because of safety that we encourage everyone involved to be open to dialogue, to make special efforts and to prepare for the impact of delaying operations.

We kindly ask the construction industry, developers and other stakeholders, who hire our companies, to be open and negotiate new delivery dates, without penalties for this transitional period.

We also encourage the European Commission and the Member States to provide direct support to the employers, so they can suspend operations temporarily, protect their workers and stay alive for the future.

The impact of this pandemic is still unknown, but thousands of companies delaying operations can have a devastating impact on the society. There must be a clear support from Public Authorities, however possible, to allow for a future of our sector and the construction industry.

Our industry, represented by EDA, cannot issue this statement without acknowledging the work of all the health professionals, medical doctors, nurses and all the staff working in hospitals or health facilities, to take care of everyone already sick. We would also like to express our gratitude and thank everyone involved in the care of those in need, for risking their own health to help and care for others.

About EDA

The European Demolition Association, EDA, is a non-profit organization bringing together the activities of demolition, decontamination and recycling. Founded in 1978, EDA represents the National Associations and specialized companies (contractors, engineers and suppliers) related to these activities. For more information and a more extensive argumentation visit: <https://www.europeandemolition.org/communication/news/information-about-covid-19>