

A green and secure Europe The strategic importance of aggregates as a domestically sourced construction raw material for a resilient Europe

The Russian invasion in Ukraine has caused a shift in national and European policies adding to the Green Deal a security aspect. Several EU member states announced to massively invest in renewable energy, nuclear power and other alternatives to fossil fuels reducing Europe's energy dependency from Russia in a new geopolitical context.

This recent shift of priorities also means that Europe needs to be able to defend itself and equally become a strong, reliable and independent pillar within NATO as laid out in the Versailles Declaration of 11 March 2022. This requires not only better coordination of a common European defence policy but also a modernisation of our military infrastructure, including roads/bridges/rail-tracks, airfields, and ports. Furthermore, Europe needs to offer housing for the largest wave of refugees since World War II. This should be undertaken with respect to climate-friendly renovation, adaptation to climate change and extreme weather conditions, low-carbon transport, and e-mobility.

A green and secure Europe does not need to be a contradiction but could be compatible. The European Aggregates Industry is producing in Europe and for Europe, both primary and secondary raw materials. Aggregates production is low-carbon and should become climate-neutral as laid out in UEPG's [Roadmap to 2030](#), increasingly producing and using renewable energy, promoting alternative fuels and the electrification of machinery. Our 26,000 extraction sites have great potential to become green steppingstones for nature protected areas.

What is needed is the recognition of the Aggregates Industry's key role played in the areas mentioned above, the need for Sustainable Finance and the inclusion in the Guidance of the EU Platform, and the immediate recognition of aggregates as an essential and strategic raw material of public interest in land-use planning and permitting procedures.

- ▶ A wind turbine base of 1-2 MW needs up to 2,400 t concrete and according to [WindEurope](#), wind energy capacity is supposed to rise from 220 GW today to up to 1,300 GW in 2050.
- ▶ Aggregates are needed for ensuring that Europe has a modern transport and military infrastructure, including roads/bridges/rail-tracks, airfields, and ports.
- ▶ The annually demanded 3 billion tonnes of primary and secondary aggregates are essential and strategic and contribute to Europe's resilience, climate-neutrality and biodiversity.