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New Life for Old Steel Structural Components

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Steel components recovered from old buildings could soon be in use as new materials.

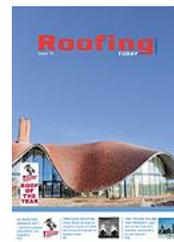
A new European project aimed at increasing the recovery and reuse of such components is to start next month.

The PROGRESS project, being led by Finland's VTT Technical Research Centre, has the support of several European organisations including the UK's Steel Construction Institute. It is being funded by the EU to the tune of a million Euros.

The construction and demolition sector creates Europe's largest amount of waste, and new measures are needed to increase the reuse and recovery of materials which can be used again. In order to achieve this, it will be increasingly important to understand at the design stage how to deconstruct buildings to enable the use of their durable components in new applications.

The project will develop new design tools, methods and recommendations, with focus on the economic and environmental aspects.

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The goal is to increase the amount of reused steel components in buildings by assisting the demolition and planning of steel structures, with the aim of decreasing virgin raw material use. It is hoped energy use in the manufacturing of new building structures can be reduced. In addition, existing opportunities and obstacles of reusing components will be identified.

The results will benefit the entire construction industry, including manufacturers, designers and contractors. New business opportunities are foreseen as recycled components and raw materials become an increasingly easy and cost-efficient option for the entire construction sector value chain. The environmental load, material costs and energy consumption will be reduced at the same time.

To begin with the PROGRESS project will focus on single-storey steel buildings, a large number of which are used by the industrial, retail, warehousing, sports and exhibition sectors.

The project, which will start in June 2017 and continue until May 2020, has a budget of EUR 1.6 million, EUR 1 million of which is being contributed by the EU.

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