

## EBC Annual Congress 2015: challenges for the future of construction SMEs in EU

On 18 and 19 June 2015 EBC held its Annual Conference in the **Pont Rouge training centre** in Geneva, in cooperation with its **Swiss member FMB**. In the morning, the conference focused on the **Swiss economic model** as a possible example to follow in other European countries. Switzerland has not been hit by the crisis and can offer interesting solutions for the construction sector. The debate covered the role of the State for economic promotion, the freedom of enterprise and the Swiss model for education and training.

■ [Click here to see the programme](#)



### On the agenda - young people and women in construction



In the round table, from the left: **J. Ten Geuzendam (DG Justice, EC)**; **C. Foucher (CAPEB)**; **A. Hernandez (DG Growth, EC)**; EBC President **P. Lièbus**; **Madi Sharma (EESC)**; **F. Bertelmann-Angenendt (BZB)**

The afternoon panel tackled the issue of the dramatically **low percentage of women and young people in construction**.

Construction is facing a critical **skill shortage** and a big demographic problem as active people are ageing. Women are about 10% of the construction sector's working population, while only 8% of the sector's working population is less than 25 years old. The future trend doesn't look very optimistic as young women in construction represent only 1% of the sector's working population.

In order to unleash the potential of the sector and not to block the still fragile recovery it is essential that women and young people are attracted to construction trades. At the end of the conference EBC's members committed to working **towards a more inclusive sector**.

- [More about young people and women in construction](#)
- [Detailed report on the discussions of the conference](#)
- [The conference press release](#)

UEAPME President Gunilla Almgren addressed the EBC General Assembly

### EBC signed its apprenticeship pledge in Riga

EBC participated in the Riga conference that marks 2 years from the launch of the **European Alliance for Apprenticeship** on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Secretary General Riccardo Viaggi signed EBC's apprenticeship pledge in front of Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, European social partners, European and national decision-makers, businesses as well as other associations' representatives. In its pledge EBC commits to improving the **quality, the image and the supply of apprenticeships as well as the mobility of apprentices**.

EBC has already been concretely involved in projects promoting the mobility of apprentices (such as [EuroApprenticeship](#)) or the attractiveness of the construction sector for young people (such as [Under Construction 3](#)).

- [See EBC's apprenticeship pledge](#)
- [More about the European Alliance for Apprenticeship](#)



EBC Annual Report 2014/2015 is out. Don't miss it!



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### SBS in Riga for the benefits of SMEs in standardisation

Small Business Standards SBS (the organisation that represents SMEs in the standard-making system) organised the **second national seminar on SMEs in standardisation** on 4 June in Riga. The seminar was part of the official programme of the Latvian EU Presidency for the Construction week.

The seminar addressed the discussion from a specific sectorial perspective, touching issues such as sustainable buildings, the implementation of the Construction Products Regulation and the implementation of the Eurocodes in the Baltic countries.

■ [More information about the SBS seminar here](#)



On behalf of SBS, a representative of EBC French member CAPEB presented the views on **BIM's adaptability to construction SMEs**, during the IV [European Standardization Summit](#), which took place in Riga on 4 June.

■ [More information here](#)