



EUROPEAN BUILDERS CONFEDERATION

The Voice of Construction Crafts and SMEs in Europe

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PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

EBC Annual Congress Construction SMEs as drivers of sustainable economic growth in Europe

Palermo, 20th June 2014

Craftsmen and small entrepreneurs of the construction sector from different European countries met to discuss measures to counter the crisis of the sector during the next European legislative period. The European Builders Confederation (EBC) Annual Congress in Palermo was the setting of these discussions.

“Each job created in the construction sector leads to the creation of 2.2 other jobs in the economy in general. If each of the 3 million construction firms had the possibility to hire just one more employee, we would have several million less unemployed people in Europe. Moreover, 92% of the construction firms have less than 10 employees, thus producing jobs at local level that cannot be delocalised and are becoming more and more qualified thanks to the energy efficiency renovation market”, explained EBC President José Antonio Calvo Delgado during his opening address.

“My three-year presidency was dominated by the worst crisis of the sector in decades. We might start seeing an end. To ensure it, today we ask the Italian Presidency of the European Council to take ambitious measures aimed at developing growth and investments and to overcome austerity policies. The role of passage of this Presidency must also be used to introduce more efficient mechanisms in the Council and the European Parliament to check the compliance of European legislation with SMEs’ needs.”, declared José Antonio Calvo Delgado

Italian Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Riccardo Nencini presented the Italian Presidency’s priorities for small and medium enterprises. He underlined the need to exclude the budget for productivity investments and infrastructure from the Stability and Growth Pact criteria in order to boost the economy.

A central issue on the agenda was construction SME access to finance. The speakers from DG Regio, the European Investment Bank and an Italian Federation for craftsmen guarantee consortia (Federart Fidi) presented various instruments such as the new European regional funds and targeted tools for SMEs, of which builders should be aware.

Patrick Liébus (CAPEB, France) was elected as the new President of EBC during the General Assembly on 20th June, starting on 1st January 2015 for the following three years. He will continue Mr. Calvo’s work to put forward construction SMEs’ concrete proposals aiming at restoring growth in Europe. These are clearly presented in the EBC Manifesto for the European elections that will serve as a work program for the next five years. The EBC General Assembly also elected **Rinaldo Incerpi** (CNA Costruzioni, Italy) as the new Vice-President for the same term.

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Link

To see the Conference programme, [please click here](#)

To know European construction SMEs' priorities for the next mandate, [click here and read the European Builders Confederation Manifesto](#).

To have an overview of European small and medium construction enterprises, [click here to have a look at the EBC annual report](#). Pages 8 and 9 present facts, figures and performance of the construction sector.

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NOTE TO THE EDITOR

Established in 1990, the European Builders Confederation - E.B.C. - is a European professional organisation representing national associations of Craftsmen and SMEs working in the construction sector. Through its national members, E.B.C. represents 2 million micro, small and medium sized enterprises from the construction sector.

The construction sector is of vital importance to the European Economy. With 3.1 million enterprises, an annual turnover of almost € 1600 billion, a total direct workforce of almost 14 million, the construction sector contributes at about 10% to the GDP of the European Union.

The European construction sector is composed at about 99% of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), who produce 80% of the construction industries output. The small enterprises (less than 50 employees) ensure 60% of the production and employ 70% of the sectors working population.

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