

### The European Construction Sector Observatory

The European Construction Sector Observatory (ECSO) aims to inform European policymakers and industry stakeholders on the market conditions and policy developments through regular analysis and comparative assessments. Visit the [ECSO website](#) and gain access to a wide range of industry data and analysis. ECSO contains all the information you need to stay up to date with the latest news and practical analyses about the construction sector in Europe.

**28 Country Fact Sheets, 135 Policy Fact Sheets, 6 Analytical Reports and 3 Trend Papers are now online.**

IN THIS NEWSLETTER YOU WILL FIND:

**Updated Analytical Report**

**5 Updated Country Fact Sheets**

**5 New Policy Fact Sheets**

**Construction news and events**

### Skills in the construction sector

The construction sector faces significant challenges when it comes to improving skills, i.e. cognitive and non-cognitive abilities, including manual skills. On the one hand, factors such as policies (and market trends) for energy and resource efficiency, occupational safety and health (OSH) and digitalisation, drive the demand for more and new skills. On the other hand, there are difficulties with upskilling, like not attracting skilled people because of the sector's negative image or weak vocational education and training (VET). This, in turn, contributes to the skills mismatch. To address this problem and make the construction sector more attractive, policymakers and private construction entities have developed various strategies and implemented a wide range of measures. This newsletter touches on some of these policies and measures.

**Updated Analytical Report is online**

**Updated Analytical Report on Improving the human capital basis**

The report, which is an updated version of the 2017 Analytical Report "Improving human capital basis", provides an overview of skills development in the EU construction sector. It looks at the factors that contribute to improving skills by highlighting both market trends and the influence of policies of energy and resource efficiency and digitalisation. The focus then shifts towards the challenges the sector faces in upskilling its workforce, and how policy-makers, often in collaboration with the sector, address these issues by developing policy initiatives. Based on this analysis, the report provides insights and lessons to be learned regarding the workforce in the construction sector.

[Download the Analytical Report](#)

[Executive summaries in EN, FR, DE, ES, IT, PL](#)

[Infographics](#)

### Updated Country Fact Sheets are online

Five updated Country Fact Sheets are now available for download, focusing on the construction markets of **Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia and Malta**. The reports supply an analysis of key figures, macroeconomic indicators, economic drivers, issues and barriers, innovation, the national policy and regulatory framework, and the status and national strategy to meet Construction 2020 objectives.

**Country Fact Sheet Belgium**

Belgium faces a labour shortage of about 20,000 construction workers every year. The highest scarcity relates to recruiting trained technical personnel with a highly technical degree, engineers and project managers. In addition, plasterers, painters, plumbers, bricklayers, carpenters, scaffolders, roofers, roof fitters, building site workers, electricians and mechanics are also in high demand. To address the shortage, stakeholders estimate that the number of new recruits will need to increase to 25,000 by 2030. Read more in the updated Country Fact Sheet.

[Download the Country Fact Sheet](#)

**Country Fact Sheet Croatia**

Since 2013, the number of job vacancies in Croatia grew by nearly 2.5% and 1.2% for the narrow construction and real estate activities sub-sectors, respectively, compared to the 2013 levels. The skills shortage encompasses not only qualified engineers but also artisans such as bricklayers and carpenters, etc. To remedy this skills shortage, the government of Croatia raised the number of licenses for foreign workers from 38,769 to 65,100 in 2019.

[Download the Country Fact Sheet](#)

**Country Fact Sheet Cyprus**

The number of job vacancies in real estate activities in Cyprus experienced a 200% growth between 2010 and 2018. This increase is reflected in the current skills gap, especially evident for energy-efficient construction and renewable energy sources (RES) professionals. In these fields, a minimum of 4,500 workers and installers are needed. To address this gap, the government has put in place some initiatives aiming to strengthen the vocational education and training system. Read more in the updated Country Fact Sheet.

[Download the Country Fact Sheet](#)

**Country Fact Sheet Estonia**

The Estonian construction sector suffers from a significant mismatch between needed and skills available. In fact, by the end of 2020, the construction sector will need to upskill over 16,000 qualified and non-qualified workers to implement sustainable construction. To address this issue and mitigate the impacts, the government has developed the [Lifetime Learning Strategy 2020](#), aiming to provide learning opportunities customised to the sector's needs. Read more in the updated Country fact Sheet.

[Download the Country Fact Sheet](#)

**Country Fact Sheet Malta**

The construction sector in Malta faces a labour shortage, especially regarding the qualifications of concrete placers and finishers. While the lack of new workers can be attributed partly to the negative perception of the construction sector, inefficient skills recognition processes have been revealed as an obstacle. In order to address the labour shortage in the sector, the Building Industry Consultative Council (BICC) plans to roll out the skill card system to all 110 trade and construction-related professions by the end of 2020 to facilitate the recognition of qualifications and skills of construction workers.

[Download the Country Fact Sheet](#)

### Policy Fact Sheets

Five new Policy Fact Sheets (PFS) are now available for you to download, focusing on policies in **Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg and Slovakia**. The PFS provide an analysis of five national policies influencing the development of the construction sector, particularly focusing on upskilling and access to finance.

**Slovakia - StavEDU BUILD UP Skills**

The StavEDU project was set up by the Association of Construction Entrepreneurs of Slovakia under the umbrella of the European Commission BUILD UP SKILLS initiative to upskill on-site workers and craftsmen in energy efficiency and renewable energy. The StavEDU addressed the training needs of over 30 blue collar professions dedicated to energy efficiency and renewable energy knowledge. The programme has also established a qualification standard to certify the skills attained. Finally, it enabled investments in skills by creating a network of companies supporting the qualification scheme. With a total budget of EUR 841,923, the programme aims to provide 540 training courses by the end of 2020, upskilling 11,700 people.

[Download the Policy Fact Sheet](#)

**Croatia - Housing Incentive Programme**

In 2001, the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning of Croatia launched the Housing Incentive Programme (IPIS). The programme is still in operation today and is being implemented by the Agency for Transactions and Mediation in Immovable Properties (APN). The programme helps beneficiaries to obtain a mortgage at more favourable lending terms compared to market conditions. The programme is open to applications from all Croatian citizens. The loan can be obtained without a guarantor, with an interest rate of 3-4% and a repayment period of up to 30 years. The scheme, however, gives a priority to first time buyers and those considered to be in need of housing. So far, the programme, has supported the financing of 243 buildings and 8,250 apartments with a budget of EUR 575 million.

[Download the Policy Fact Sheet](#)

**Italy - Social Housing Renovation Programme**

To support the renovation of the national social housing stock, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT) developed the Social Housing Renovation Programme (SHRP) in 2014. The aim of the programme was to transform all social dwellings that were considered uninhabitable, revitalise the social housing stock and bring the in line with EU regulations, notably regarding energy efficiency and seismic safety regulations. The operation was supported by EUR 468 million in the form of grants and it was open to municipalities with a high population density. The programme achieved half of its objectives between 2014 and 2017 resulting in 13,969 out of 26,536 dwellings renovated. The Social Housing Renovation Programme has been extended, however, and is expected to achieve 99% of its overall objectives by 2024.

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**Latvia - Construction Information System**

To foster the digitalisation of the construction process and make it more transparent, efficient and easier to access, the Latvian Government introduced the Construction Information System (CIS). In 2017, the objective of the BIS is to create a user-friendly information system by reducing the administrative burden of construction processes on individuals and legal entities; in particular, the BIS seeks to reduce the need to duplicate information and paper work, improve services availability and increase re-use of public data by raising awareness of BIS. With a budget of EUR 1,700,000 provided by the European Regional Development Fund (EUR 1,445,000) and State funding (EUR 255,000), 93,330 requests have been registered in BIS, rising over 53% between 2018 and 2019.

[Download the Policy Fact Sheet](#)

**Luxembourg - Housing Pact**

In 2001, the Housing Pact was launched by the Ministry of Housing, Ministry of the Interior, participating towns and the Luxembourg Housing Fund. The Pact aims to increase the supply of housing to meet the demands of a growing population and increase the affordability of the housing stock. The Housing Pact introduced a series of legal, fiscal and financial measures to incentivise and support new housing construction. With a budget of EUR 415.5 million, a total of 32,837 new housing units have been built which is only two thirds of the original target of 48,000. It is expected, however, that a further 20,000 new units will be constructed and, once fully complete, will have surpassed the original targets of the Pact.

[Download the Policy Fact Sheet](#)

### Construction News and Events

Construction is changing rapidly, with new business models, concepts and technologies being introduced to best respond to new demands and requirements. To keep you aware, please find below a quick summary of news and upcoming events.

Upcoming events

**Renovation wave in Europe: how to equip building professionals with future-proof skills?**  
| 28 May 2020 | 12:00-13:30 | Webinar

The aim of the webinar is to discuss the importance of education and training to achieve high energy performing buildings, particularly in the context of large-scale renovation interventions: How do we get more skilled workers involved in renovations? Are building professionals prepared for nearly zero-energy buildings and for the modernisation of the building stock in the light of technological developments and smart solutions? How to convince home and building owners to rely more on skilled professionals? How do these professionals get recognised by the market? These are some of the questions that we will explore in the webinar, join us!

A detailed agenda and a registration link are available at <https://www.buildup.eu/en/events/webinar-renovation-wave-europe-how-equip-building-professionals-future-proof-skills>

[See more](#)

### Fresh Construction News

**Study on empowering adults through upskilling and reskilling pathways – volume I: adult population with potential for upskilling and reskilling**

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) recently published a study on empowering adults through upskilling and reskilling pathways. This study is the first volume of Cedefop research on the adult population with potential for upskilling and reskilling. The report estimates the magnitude of the low-skilled adult population according to a broader conceptualisation which goes beyond educational attainment levels, and considers digital skills, literacy and numeracy, as well as skill loss and skill obsolescence. In addition, the study also identifies the different subgroups of adults being at risk of being low skilled. The report provides a basis for efficient policy making in the areas of upskilling of the EU low skilled workforce.

[Read more](#)

**Global inventory of regional and national qualifications frameworks 2019 – Volume II: National and regional cases**

The European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) recently published a global inventory of regional and national qualification frameworks from around the world since 2017. The inventory examines main policy objectives, levels and use of learning outcomes, status of implementation of National Qualification Frameworks and summarises lessons learnt and future developments. In addition, the publication provides an overview of Regional Qualification Frameworks from seven regions around the world.

[Read more](#)