


European Construction Sector Observatory
 Providing valuable **insight** on the **European construction industry**

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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, 155 Policy Fact Sheets, 7 Analytical Reports and 3 Trend Papers are now online.

IN THIS NEWSLETTER YOU WILL FIND:

6 Updated Country Fact Sheets



5 New Policy Fact Sheets



Construction news and events



Skills in the Construction Sector

Recent market trends and policy developments have had significant impact on skill requirements in the construction sector. The growth of energy and resource efficiency, occupational safety and health (OSH), digitalisation and broader upskilling, drive the demand for workers increasingly to acquire new skills. To tackle this challenge, policymakers and private construction entities have developed various strategies and programmes. This newsletter is about some of these policies and measures.

Updated Country Fact Sheets are online

Six updated Country Fact Sheets are now available for download, focusing on the construction markets in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta. The reports provide an analysis of key figures, macroeconomic indicators, economic drivers, issues and barriers, innovation and the national/regional policy and regulatory framework.

Country Fact Sheet Austria

Although adult participation in **VET in the broad construction sector** saw a decrease between 2010 and 2019, Austria still enjoys one of the **highest rates of participation among EU member states** (88% compared to the EU-28 average of 47%). Several initiatives were launched by public and private sector programmes to tackle the construction skills gaps. The **Austrian Public Employment Service** introduced the **New Digital Skills Initiative**. In 2019, the **POBB Group**, a leading construction company in Austria, offers **commercial trainee programmes (IuBAU Business)** for university graduates to get a first hands-on experience in the construction sector. Read more about the skills demands and challenges in the construction sector in Austria in the new **Country Fact Sheet**.

[Download the Country Fact Sheet](#)

Country Fact Sheet Belgium

Belgium has difficulty filling **job vacancies in the construction sector**, largely due to skills shortages among its workforce – this is especially the case since 2019. The highest scarcity relates to professions such as trained technical personnel with a highly technical degree, engineers, project managers, and mathematicians. At the same time, **adult participation in VET in the broad construction sector**, as well as the number of tertiary students enrolled in engineering, manufacturing and construction, decreased. Belgian regional governments, such as the **Flemish Community (BF)**, the **French Community (BFr)** and the **Walloon region**, are **taking action to mitigate these trends**. Read more about the construction sector in Belgium in the new **Country Fact Sheet**.

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Country Fact Sheet Croatia

One of the most pressing challenges of the Croatian construction sector is to **meet the demand for skills**. In a recent survey, 94% of construction companies cited availability of skilled staff as a factor limiting building activity and a long-term barrier to investment in Croatia. The Croatian government has reacted by introducing **targeted scholarships in vocational secondary schools**. Additionally, the **Croatian Agency for VET and Adult Education (AVETA)** organised **skills competitions and job fairs for students**. AVETA is promoting VET through the **Slobovan Qualification Frameworks (KROQF)**, aimed at better aligning adult and higher education and VET with labour market needs. Read more about the future of the construction sector in Croatia in the new **Country Fact Sheet**.

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Country Fact Sheet Cyprus

There has been an improvement in the availability and **recruitment of qualified construction workers** since the Cypriot financial crisis of 2013 but skills shortages persist. Cyprus has been developing a **new lifelong learning strategy** covering 2021-2027 and plans to upskill 4,000 people. Additionally, the number of tertiary students in engineering, manufacturing and construction has increased. The **Cypriot Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (MoECYS)** made it a priority to **develop new, and review existing, VET curricula** in order to align it with changing labour market needs. The **European Social Fund** has been contributing by upgrading technical and vocational education and training. Read more about the upskilling in the construction sector in Cyprus in the new **Country Fact Sheet**.

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Country Fact Sheet Luxembourg

There are increasing construction job vacancies in Luxembourg, highlighting employers' difficulties in finding the **right skills** to meet their needs. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training has compiled a **list of shortage occupations** in Luxembourg, which includes logistic, civil and mechanical engineers. Adult participation in VET and the numbers of tertiary students in engineering, manufacturing and construction have been increasing gradually. Nevertheless, the government launched several initiatives, for example **LuxBuild2020**, which focuses on the **training of blue-collar workers**. Read more about the future jobs and skills of the construction sector in Luxembourg in the new **Country Fact Sheet**.

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Country Fact Sheet Malta

Labour shortages in the Maltese economy are a persisting challenge. To address this issue, **VET spending by the government increased by 70%** between 2016 and 2018. As a result, adult participation in VET increased, although the skills of tertiary graduates in Malta do not sufficiently match the labour requirements of the market. The **European Structural Fund project 'Achieving vocational excellence through enhanced work-based learning'** involves **developing and delivering a mentoring training programme** for Malta's College of Arts, Science and Technology lecturers. Project implementation began in 2019 and is expected to be accomplished by 2022. Finally, the **E-Construct programme**, launched in October 2019, focuses on **management and ICT in construction industry**. Read more about the future of the construction sector in Malta in the new **Country Fact Sheet**.

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Policy Fact Sheets

Five new Policy Fact Sheets (PFS) are now available for download, focusing on policies in Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands. The PFS provide a clear view of five national policies all moving towards a circular economy, and thus affecting the required skills of the construction workforce. They address the skills gap and propose policies to remedy that gap.

Czech Republic - Implementation of the Czech BIM Strategy

The Strategy promotes the use of BIM in the public sector to improve cost-effectiveness and encourage its use in the private sector. The **Czech Republic's BIM Strategy** is currently being **implemented through to 2022**. In order to plan effectively, adapt their processes and build capacity, stakeholders must invest in skills development. Digital transformation requires a **trained workforce** to be able to use the tools effectively. The **Czech Standardisation Agency (CSA)**, along with several government ministries, created a **working group, "Education and PR"**, that organises educational activities to provide training on the methodologies and standards of BIM. Read more about the implementation of the Czech BIM Strategy in the **new Policy Fact Sheet**.

[Download the Policy Fact Sheet](#)

France - Circular Economy Initiative

The **National Secretariat for Investment (NSI)** and the **Agency for the Ecological Transition (ADEME)** are **funding strategic projects** to accelerate France's transition to a circular economy, creating new technologies, and generating growth and employment in the future. The **Projects d'Investissements d'Avenir (PIA)** and the **Circular Economy Fund (CEF)** run calls for project proposals which are then assessed by ADEME, the NSI, and are jointly validated by the NSI and the French Prime Minister. The PIA released its **2020 budget, worth a total of EUR 20 billion** allocated for construction related projects. Funds **allocated to research and higher education** amount to EUR 21.9 billion or 62.5% over a period of 10 years, and EUR 5.3 billion or 45% over a period of 15 years. Read more about the various project details of the Circular Economy Initiative in the new **Policy Fact Sheet**.

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Germany - Circular Construction Initiative (Kreislaufwirtschaft BAU)

An **independent network of seven leading German associations** generate reports that assess the status and progress achieved by the German construction sector in terms of its transitions to a circular economy. The **reports** translate technical data into **actionable information to support policy dialogue and learning**. Between 1996 and 2020 the network made a commitment to achieve a 50% reduction in the total amount of reusable and recyclable construction waste sent to landfill. As part of that commitment the **CC initiative developed and delivered training** (Ermittlung und Angebot von Ausbildungs- und Fortbildungsmaßnahmen) on industry-specific topics, policies and measures. To find out more about the Circular Construction Initiative, consult the **new Policy Fact Sheet**.

[Download the Policy Fact Sheet](#)

Ireland - Home Performance Index

The **Irish Green Building Council (IGBC)** designed the **Home Performance Index (HPI)** with the goal to get it **easily applied and fully integrated** with Irish Building Regulations. IGBC provides an **HPI assessor training and accreditation programme**. The aim is to assemble a group of highly skilled and certified HPI Assessors. There are three stages to the HPI training programme. First, trainees review the **training materials, manuals and tools** one week in advance. Then, they attend a one-day practical training course. Finally, they complete a week of assessment to be submitted within four-weeks of the course completion. To date, a **total of 56 professionals** have completed the HPI assessor training and accreditation programme. Discover more about HPI in the **new Policy Fact Sheet**.

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Netherlands - Holland Circular Hotspot

Holland Circular Hotspot (HCH) in collaboration with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency, collaborated on a platform that brings together companies, knowledge institutes and local authorities active in the Dutch circular economy. They promote and support **knowledge exchange, international collaboration** and the transformation of work- and production methodologies. Although the HCH does not provide training courses, they offer **physical and digital meeting places** for organisations to stimulate joint and cross-sector collaboration at the national and international level. The HCH also provides an **English-language website** with information, documentation and materials for international audiences. Learn more about the Holland Circular Hotspot in the **new Policy Fact Sheet**.

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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.

Construction News

MDPI: Results of six Horizon 2020 projects

A recent paper focusing on sustainable energy skills in the construction sector was published, based on the results of six Horizon 2020 projects—INSTRUCT, BIMEET, the r2E2 Roadshow, TRAINSUSTAIN, HPAAIL, and BUSLeague. The report discusses how to "increase the number of skilled building professionals and/or blue-collar workers across the building design, operation, and maintenance stages of the value chain (designers, architects, engineers, building managers, technicians, installers, blue-collar workers including apprentices, and other building professionals)", with a specific focus on the engagement of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

[Read the full report](#)

Pact for Skills

On 10 November 2020, the European Commission launched a new initiative called **Pact for Skills**. Public and private organisations are invited to **cooperate, collaborate and meet the challenge** of upskilling and reskilling the European workforce. To make the transition towards a greener and more digital economy possible, the EU must ensure that its workers are ready to meet market demands. "The Pact is the first of the flagship actions under the **European Skills Agenda** and is firmly anchored in the **European Pillar of Social Rights**." A roundtable took place between construction stakeholders and Commissioners Breton and Schmit on 27 November 2020. Discussion on possible commitments is ongoing and open to any interested stakeholders.

[Find out more information here](#)

Upcoming Events

The construction sector is constantly evolving, applying new business models, concepts and technologies to adapt to new demands and standards. To keep you updated, we provide a quick summary of upcoming events but at the moment of writing there are no events scheduled.





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