

## Exchange of views on posted workers at the European Parliament

# Small and medium construction companies ask for the revision to stop unfair competition in the Internal Market

**Brussels, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016** – The Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament organised an exchange of views today on the European Commission’s proposal to revise the Posted Workers Directive. The European Builders Confederation (EBC) was invited as a stakeholder to share the point of view of European small and medium construction companies on this issue. The posting of workers in the Internal Market, which is currently based on lowering labour costs, is putting the construction sector under a lot of pressure. EBC therefore supports the revision of the rules on posted workers to stop unfair competition between construction companies working in the same country but not respecting the same rules.

The impact of the posting of workers in construction is bigger than in any other sector. 44% of the total posted workers are in construction, which means that this phenomenon represents 5% of the active workforce of the sector. In certain countries – such as in [Belgium and France](#) – the impact is even higher\*.

EBC President Patrick Liébus said during the exchange of views with MEPs “In Belgium between 2010 and 2014 almost 15,000 construction workers lost their jobs. In the same period, however, there has been an increase of almost 15,000 posted workers in the sector. This clearly shows a substitution of local workers with posted ones, which is mainly due to the lower salaries of posted workers. Construction is a highly labour-intensive sector, so the impact of labour costs on the competitiveness of the sector is huge. Applying similar rules to local and posted workers is essential for the posting to be a source of qualified jobs that really match the demand of the local market!”

Patrick Liébus concluded “Our colleagues in the Central and Eastern European countries are losing qualified workers in their countries, as these go to work abroad either as bogus or genuine posted workers. This has a deep impact on small companies, which work mainly at local level, because they lack the necessary skills and workforce. We share the same concerns as the European construction trade union on this topic: we want to protect workers, fight against social dumping and unfair competition.”

*\*Ends\**

### Links

Read [our new briefing on posted workers](#) with figures on construction and construction SMEs’ suggestions

### Notes to editors

Established in 1990, the **European Builders Confederation (EBC)** is a European professional organisation representing national associations of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises working in the construction sector. EBC sits on the European Social Dialogue Committee of Construction. EBC is a member of UEAPME (the European association of micro-enterprises and SMEs), on behalf of which it chairs the UEAPME Construction Forum.

The construction sector is of vital importance to the European economy. With 3 million enterprises and a total direct workforce of 18 million, the construction sector contributes at around 9% to the GDP of the European Union.



## European Builders Confederation

99.9% of the European construction sector is composed of small and medium-sized companies, which produce 80% of the construction industry's output. Small enterprises (less than 50 employees) are responsible for 60% of the production and employ 70% of the sector's working population.

### ■ **Press contacts**

**Riccardo Viaggi**, Secretary General of EBC: [riccardo.viaggi@ebc-construction.eu](mailto:riccardo.viaggi@ebc-construction.eu); +32.(0)2.2801650; +32 (0)495 123 577

**Valeria Mazzagatti**, EBC press and communications officer: [valeria.mazzagatti@ebc-construction.eu](mailto:valeria.mazzagatti@ebc-construction.eu); +32.(0)2 5142323

### ■ **Follow us on Twitter**

To keep abreast of our campaigns and news, and to join the debate, follow us at [twitter.com/EBC\\_SMEs](https://twitter.com/EBC_SMEs)

---

EBC a.i.s.b.l.  
Member of UEAPME  
EU Transparency Register n° 0925670147-51

4, rue Jacques de Lalaing  
B- 1040 Brussels  
Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 514 23 23  
secretariat@ebc-construction.eu  
www.ebc-construction.eu