



# EUROPEAN BUILDERS CONFEDERATION

*The Voice of Construction Crafts and SMEs in Europe*

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## HEALTH AND SAFETY IN CONSTRUCTION SMEs

**EBC concludes its European project and speaks at the Closing event of the European Campaign of the Bilbao Agency**

London, Friday 13 November 2009

Today 40 representatives of construction SME federations and employees' trade unions from 11 countries\*, as well as the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (Bilbao Agency) and the European Commission gathered in London for the closing conference of the European social dialogue project **"Under Construction II – Improving health and safety in construction SMEs"** that EBC managed in 2009.

The closing conference, co-hosted by the Federation of Master Builders (UK member of EBC), was the moment to present the main findings, resulting from 10 meetings in 10 different European capitals organised over the past year. The UK government was represented by Lord McKenzie, Undersecretary of State with responsibility for the Health and Safety Executive, who delivered the keynote speech about health and safety in the UK. The EBC project management team also presented the main tools of the project's dissemination strategy: the final publication and a documentary film, both printed in 500 copies and ready for wide distribution.

***"During this project we managed to tackle the main stumbling blocks to sound health and safety practice in construction SMEs. Our major problem is to raise awareness, inform and assist 3 million European construction companies, employing an average of 4 workers",*** said Andrea Marconi, EBC President. ***"As the voice of construction crafts and SMEs in Europe, EBC's role is to facilitate best practice exchange among national construction SMEs associations and to contribute to the dissemination of the European 'Healthy Workplaces' campaign. And as we heard today, we succeeded."***

Also in the framework of EBC's partnership with the Bilbao Agency, EBC's Secretary General Riccardo Viaggi will speak about the Under Construction II project during the Healthy Workplaces European Summit, taking place in Bilbao, Spain on Tuesday 17 November.

For more information, please visit [www.eubuilders.org](http://www.eubuilders.org).

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\*Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Czech Republic, Romania, United-Kingdom and Turkey.

**Att: Conference programme**

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 million enterprises, an annual turnover of almost € 1300 billion, a total direct workforce of almost 14 million, the construction sector contributes 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.

**Information to the press:** *for any other question, please contact the EBC Secretariat*

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