

Labour and Skills shortages

Brief description and main aims:

The construction industry is reporting labour shortages in most of the EU Member States. Labour shortages in construction are now nearly three times the level observed 10 years ago. Added to this labour shortage, construction companies face skills shortage and skills gaps. The European Commission has taken this issue seriously and has proposed several initiatives:

- On 20th March 2024, the European Commission presented a communication on “*Labour and Skills shortages in the EU: an Action Plan*”. It focuses on five key policy areas for action at EU, national, regional and social partner level: supporting the activation of underrepresented people in the labour market; providing support for skills, training and education; improving working conditions; improving fair intra-EU mobility for workers and learners; attracting talent from outside the EU.
- On 5th March 2025, the European Commission published the Union of Skills. The *Union of Skills* has 4 key strands: build skills for quality jobs and lives, upskill and reskill, circulate skills with the free movement of people across the EU and attract, develop and retain talent.
- Finally, the European Commission has also proposed a regulation establishing the *EU Talent Pool* to attract workers from third countries. The proposal targets priority jobs, many of which are in the construction sector.

Why FIEC is dealing with this topic:

The problems of lack of labour and skills shortages in construction are crucial for FIEC. They create difficulties for companies that are seeking to recruit workers and it is the long-term competitiveness of the industry which is at stake.

The issue of labour and skills shortages are also discussed in the framework of the Social Dialogue with EFBWW (European Federation of Builders and Woodworkers) and is addressed in EU projects.

Many of the solutions proposed at EU level are of highest interest for construction companies: recognition of qualification, improving and updating VET (*Vocational Education and Training*), working conditions, apprenticeships, facilitate intra-EU mobility, entry of third-country nationals on the labour market.

Actions and key dates:

May 2023 → Launch of the *European Year of Skills*.

10/10/2023 → FIEC [Position Paper](#) on shortage of labour in the construction industry.

21/02/2024 → FIEC participates in a consultation hearing on labour and skills shortages organised by the European Commission.

20/03/2024 → Publication of the European Commission Communication on “*Labour and Skills shortages in the EU: an Action Plan*”.

May 2024 → Publication of “*EURES 2023 Report on labour shortages and surpluses*” with a focus on construction.

02/10/2024 → FIEC [Position Paper](#) on the *EU Talent Pool*.

14/11/2024 → DESOCO 2 meeting on labour shortages.

03/03/2025 → FIEC President (Piero Petrucco) participated in a meeting with Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu on the *Union of Skills*.

05/03/2025 → FIEC and EFBWW [joint declaration](#) on labour and skills shortages.

05/03/2025 → European Commission presents the *Union of Skills*.

10/2025 → FIEC updates Position Paper on shortage of labour in the construction industry.