

Press release

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First “Construction Summit”: laying the foundations for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction industry

“The performance of the construction sector has a significant bearing on the development of the overall economy.” declared Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission, *“The competitiveness of construction companies is therefore an important issue not only for growth and employment in general but also to ensure the sustainability of the sector.”* added Tajani referring to the construction sector as strategic for growth, within the EU 2020 strategy agenda.

Vice-President Tajani made his intervention in the “Construction Summit”, organised by FIEC and the European Commission that took place today in Istanbul during the federation’s annual congress. The aim of the summit was to discuss a forthcoming Action Plan for the Construction Sector soon to be adopted by the European Commission together with representatives of the construction industry from across Europe.

Outgoing FIEC President, Luisa Todini, took the opportunity to underline that *“there is much potential linked to the renovation of existing buildings, renewables, and sustainable transport and energy infrastructure but very often financing is lacking and the regulatory framework does not encourage a long term investment perspective”*. Furthermore, Todini added, *“many of our companies, mainly SMEs, are being forced into bankruptcy through continued late payment by public authorities and through the refusal of banks to lend.”*

In order to ensure the competitiveness of EU companies, *“it is crucial to ensure a level playing field in the compliance with environmental, social and corporate governance standards both on the European and on international markets”* she underlined.

Concluding the summit, Todini congratulated Vice-President Tajani on his decision to hold more regular high level summits between FIEC and the European Commission adding *“this is a very welcome step and we will do all we can to ensure that the proposed policies and recommendations will translate into useful instruments for sustainable and competitive growth on the ground”*.

FIEC is committed to playing its role as part of the solution to the challenges Europe faces today and in the future.

FIEC is the European Construction Industry Federation, representing via its 33 national Member Federations in 29 countries (27 EU & EFTA, Croatia and Turkey) construction enterprises of all sizes, i.e. craftsmen, small and medium-sized enterprises as well as “global players”, carrying out all forms of building and civil engineering activities.

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