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61st ECCE General Meeting – 30th ECCE Anniversary 29th – 30th May 2015, Naples, Italy



European Council
of
Civil Engineers



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
ITALIAN ENGINEERS



Group photo of the 62nd ECCE General Meeting participants

The 61st ECCE General Meeting – 30th ECCE Anniversary has finished successfully. It was held on 29th – 30th May 2015, in Naples, Italy hosted by the National Council of Italian Engineers (CNI).

This festive General Meeting was combined with the Conference “Artistic and Monumental Heritage – Restoration, Safeguard and Enhancement” organized by CNI with the collaboration of the [Order of Engineers of Naples](#) and the scientific collaboration of the International Council on Monuments and Sites ([ICOMOS](#)). The Conference took place on Friday 29th

May 2015, at the [Basilica di San Giovanni Maggiore a Pignatelli](#) which is a cultural monument itself. The Conference was opened by Mr. Nicola Monda CNI Councilor for International Affairs and from Mr. Włodzimierz Szymczak ECCE President. It was a well-attended Conference and many persons from Italian as well as International Engineering Organizations honored us with their presence. In particular among the distinguished guests were the following: Mr. Armando Zambrano CNI President, Mr. Luigi Vinci President of the Order of Engineers of Naples, Mr. Gaetano Manfredi Rector of the University of Naples Federico II, Mr. Marwan Abdelhamid WFEO President, Mrs. Yussef Tahani WFEO Executive Director, Mr. Thomas Sancho Marco WCCE President, Mr. Jose Manuel Pereira Vieira FEANI President, Mr. Adil Al Hadithi FAE Secretary General, Mrs. Ann Van Eycken CLAIU Secretary General, Mr. Giandomenico Massari ExCo Member of the Nigeria Society of Engineers and Mr. David Caro ESBA President.



Conference “Artistic and Monumental Heritage – Restoration, Safeguard and Enhancement” at Basilica di San Giovanni Maggiore a Pignatelli

On Saturday 30th May the 30th ECCE Anniversary Celebration took place. The 61st ECCE General Meeting was officially opened by the ECCE President Włodzimierz Szymczak. The [History of ECCE since 1985](#) was presented by Mr. Vassilis Economopoulos ECCE Former President and then the [ECCE Future Perspectives](#) was presented by Prof. Fernando Bran-

co ECCE Immediate Past President. As part of the 30th ECCE Anniversary, ECCE President awarded the two founding Members of ECCE, the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE, U.K.) and the Colegio de Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos (CICCP, Spain) for their outstanding contribution and services for the ECCE since its establishment, as well as the host organization Consiglio Nazionale degli Ingegneri. The CICCP President Mr. Juan Santamera received the award and honored us with his presence. The Late ECCE Honorary President Prof. Jose Medem was also commemorated during the 61st ECCE General Meeting with a memorial presentation that was delivered by Mr. Vassilis Economopoulos in honor to this significant man, Civil Engineer and friend.



From left to right: CICCP President Juan Santamera, ECCE President Włodzimierz Szymczak, ECCE Immediate Past President Fernando Branco, ECCE Vice President - President Elect Massimo Mariani



From left to right: ECCE Vice President - President Elect Massimo Mariani, CNI Councilor for International Affairs Nicola Monda, ECCE President Włodzimierz Szymczak, ECCE Immediate Past President Fernando Branco,

Thank you all for having been a part of this magnificent and memorable event at this important moment in the history of the European Council of Civil Engineers.

For further information on the 61st ECCE General Meeting please visit the link [here](#).

62nd ECCE General Meeting Announcement

30th - 31st October 2015, Prague, Czech Republic



We are pleased to announce that the 62nd ECCE General Meeting – 30th ECCE Anniversary, will take place on 30th – 31st October 2015, at the [Orea Hotel Pyramida](#), in Prague, Czech Republic, hosted by the [Czech Chamber of Certified Engineers and Technicians \(CKAIT\)](#) according to the kind offer of our ECCE delegate Mr. Alois Materna. This General Meeting will be the twin celebration of the 30th Anniversary of ECCE and we are glad that it will be hosted in the marvelous city of Prague.

Accommodation

Room reservations must be made **until 31st August** at the following link <http://tinyurl.com/62nd-ECCE-General-Assembly>.

More information regarding the Agenda and further details will follow in the near future.

Please make sure that you save the dates in your calendar in order to participate in this festive event!

We look forward to welcoming you in Prague this October!

High Level Tripartite Strategic Forum on Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises

Wednesday, 25th March 2015



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Sustainable Growth and EU 2020

Sustainable Industrial Policy and Construction



Past president Fernando Branco participated in this meeting in representation of ECCE. The main guidelines that were presented for the construction sector are presented below.

It is important to highlight the following points:

- Important investments are allocated to Energy rehabilitation (in practice any building rehabilitation can use these EU funds if some energy saving is associated to the works);
- EU does not know what is the saving energy return from this rehabilitation, so it is investing also in green value increasing of the property, to convince people to invest in rehabilitation;
- EU is also investing in Life cycle and recycling of the demolition debris, trying to impose that in a Green Public Procurement, what nobody really knows what it is. For now, the idea is to try to recycle public buildings up to 70%;
- Eurocodes are being pushed to be adapted all over the world, and simultaneously to be simplified.
- Political strategies for EU investments in Africa, Middle East and America are being studied to protect EU companies.

Summary of the actions of the High Level Tripartite Strategic Forum

Thematic Group 1 - "Stimulating investment in building renovation, infrastructure and innovation"

Action 1: Blending of different Financial Instruments: Financial Instruments for energy efficiency schemes

Follow up on the report from the Energy Efficiency Financial Instruments Group (EEFIG) should address properly drivers in terms of demand for use of financial instruments, e.g. the needs for a coherent regulatory framework for energy efficiency, the standardisation and effective use of available means within the Structural Funds.

Action 2: Property valuation

Property valuation should be supported by an evidence based data set to better capture the value of energy and environmental performance. TG1 members suggest to create in collaboration with DG GROW and DG Energy a dedicated working group on the impact of sustainability on property values. This working group should bring about actions focused on (a) strengthening the data basis on impact of sustainability on property values, (b) strengthening the evidence base for conclusions on this (incorporating not only a value premium orientation but also a risk assessment attitude), using case studies, impact studies, existing material, etc. and (c) increase and improve the dialogue between the real estate sector, the valuation industry, the construction sector and financial institutions in order to improve investor readiness and related risk management.

Action 3: Life Cycle Costing (LCC)

EFCA and DG GROW to undertake further actions potentially with support from ACE (Architects Council of Europe) or CPE (Construction Products Europe). The focus is to be placed on how to: a) develop a set of cost classification criteria, including data collection and analysis; b) explore involving LCC in public sector works through public procurement, and; c) develop a scenario to further implement LCC in private sector work processes.

Action 4: Public-private partnership models for various market segments and project sizes

In order to raise awareness about the potential offered by financial instruments, practical experience with public-private financial models should be spread.

**Thematic Group 2 - "Skills and qualifications"**

Action 1: Review the eligibility for funding measures to ensure fair access for all workers, professionals and sizes of enterprise especially for SMEs.

Sustainable funding for long term training programmes is crucial for improving the human capital basis of the sector. Existing approaches in this area have to be further analysed. Good practices and innovative methods at national/regional level (e.g. the French levy for construction sector training) to be identified and promoted

Action 2: Provide guidelines for developing partnerships to optimise the uptake of the innovation process by suitably trained people.

Partnerships between academia/the educational sector and the enterprises in the construction sector are vital for a tailor-made preparation of prospective employees, facilitating recruitment processes and adaptation of new employees. Such partnerships, activities and dedicated events should be promoted and followed up to provide references on how such partnership can be successfully achieved.

Action 3: Review existing EU level initiatives and partnerships that support training, including sectorial trade and professional associations.

Effective promotion of EU funding opportunities for training activities is recommended. Moreover, the members of the group are encouraged to promote the "Apprenticeship Pledge" initiative among their affiliates.

Action 4: Facilitate mobility of construction professionals.

Mobility is one of the key elements to address geographical imbalances of sector's skills and to contribute to improving the human capital basis of the sector (e.g. up-skilling through short term visits). A greater role may be performed by sectorial and educational organisations in this regard, as well as by Public Employment Services across the EU Member States and these activities could be better supported by EU financial instruments. Specific initiatives and identified good practices to be promoted.

Thematic Group 3 - "Sustainable use of natural resources"

Action 1: Encourage the creation of an EU framework for building assessment

In order to increase the acceptance of the evaluation framework, the needs of the market from the demand perspective should be identified and addressed properly in the development of core indicators.

Action 2: Management and valorisation of Construction & Demolition Waste (C&D Waste)

A technical and economic study should support the elaboration of specific tools and/or guidelines for the assessment of buildings prior to demolition and renovation. Moreover, the development of a standardized protocol for the management of C&D Waste recycling should increase the potential of recycled materials. This should be accompanied, where appropriate, by the definition of sound end-of-waste criteria.

Financial instruments should also engage the private sector to explore investment and financing opportunities in C&D Waste recycling facilities. Moreover, Green Public Procurement might facilitate the access to public markets and effective use of recycled materials.

Finally, local urban planning should consider setting of new C&D waste recycling plants when economically viable.

Thematic Group 4 - "Internal market"

Action 1: Fitness check concerning the Internal Market for Construction Products and Services

TG4 to provide and support stakeholder interaction for the pilot 'Fitness check', and to monitor progress and assess outcomes.

Action 2: Network of national contact points for construction products and services

Improve information provided by contact points (including making information available in different languages), together with exploring good practices for effective communication amongst different contact points and competent departments within Member States so as to facilitate better and more efficient information provision to users.

Action 3: Insurance for cross border services in construction

Assess in 2015 the results from the ELIOS project and the EC 2014 proposals under the Services Directive for improving cross-border insurance cover.

Action 4: Eurocodes / Analysis of Eurocodes

The implementation, simplification, evolution and promotion of Eurocodes need to be pursued.

Action 5: Ensure effective market surveillance in construction products

Enhance market surveillance of construction product: a) improved information provision to raise public awareness (e.g. on legal obligations, contact information for Market surveillance authorities and market surveillance actions and procedures); b) improve cooperation with concerned economic actors and c) capacity building and facilitation of peer exchanges.

Thematic Group 5 - " International competitiveness"**Action 1: Focusing future work and collaboration on the construction sector with a well-targeted selection of international partners**

Cooperation efforts should focus on the African, neighbouring countries and United States markets and address market access barriers both for construction products and services, particularly those on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or establishing local offices. In more detail, market access barriers to wood-related products in Japan should be discussed in the EU-Japan negotiations. With regard to EU US Free Trade Agreement (TTIP), a specific follow-up is required for dredging and marine services in the US (Jones Act). Architects call for Mutual Recognition Agreement from US.

Moreover, the internationalisation of SMEs in the construction sector should be further supported by EU-wide export facilitation measures.

Action 2: Funding and guarantees for international construction projects

Further support should be given to the development of the proposal to involve Export Credit Agencies in EU Development Funds in order to increase the benefits of EU development funds for EU contractors, for example by continued support to the EIC ITF Africa 2.0 proposal and its inclusion in the EUBEC TG-6 Working Group.

The design and development of Design-Build-Operate rules in public procurement for developing countries should be based on appropriate consultation of the construction industry stakeholders

Strict environmental and social (e.g. corporate social responsibility) criteria in international and development aid projects should to ensure a level playing field between EU (or OECD) contractors and other competitors.

Action 3: International cooperation on regulation and standards beyond Eurocodes

Best practices in achieving Mutual Recognition Agreements with priority countries should be developed and applied in ongoing negotiations. Other ways of ensuring recognition of professional qualifications should also be explored.

New avenues for international cooperation on standards should be explored with practitioners from the private sector – such as for example World Green Building Council - and from the public sector.

The promotion of EUROCODES should be continued in neighbours countries, Middle-East and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

ECCE President meeting with the Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects (ÖIAV) and the Austrian Federal Chamber of Architects and Chartered Engineering Consultants (bAIK)



From left to right: Peter Reichel Secretary General ASEA, Włodzimierz Szymczak President ECCE, Prof. Heinz Brandl President ASEA

Already before our 61st General Meeting in Naples, ECCE President Włodzimierz Szymczak, realizing one of his priorities - enlargement of ECCE Membership – established e-mail contact with Prof. Heinz Brandl – President of the Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects. The correspondence concerned a possibility of establishing closer cooperation between the two organizations, including mem-

bership of Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects in ECCE. Consequently, on 16th June 2015 in Vienna the direct meeting between ECCE President and ASEA leadership took place. Włodzimierz Szymczak informed the Austrian partners about the agenda and results of the 61st ECCE General Meeting and presented tasks, goals and current works of our organization. Prof. Brandl and Secretary

General of ASEA, Mr. Peter Reichel, talked about current situation in Austrian civil engineers community and organizations. Finally, both sides came to the common conclusion that it is worth cooperating closer and Austrian Civil Engineers are strong enough and interested in playing the proper role in ECCE, including their membership in it.

President Szymczak gave an interview for a local internet TV station. The main topic of that interview was the message to young engineers concerning the challenges faced by civil engineering profession and also chances and opportunities which engineering education gives.

Sightseeing of the newly renovated ASEA Headquarter took place. This historic building is located in the strict center of Vienna. Particularly impressive is the main hall restored with great attention to historical details.

On June 17, President Włodzimierz Szymczak met with Mr. Klaus Thuriedl



Façade of the ASEA Headquarters

riedl who, in addition to his function in ECEC, is also a member of leadership of the Austrian Federal Chamber of Architects and Chartered Engineering Consultants. The main topic of the meeting was the possibility of developing and deep-



Detail of the ceiling in ASEA Headquarters

ening cooperation between ECCE and community of the Austrian civil engineers linked with both the Chamber and the Society.

The cooperation on the topic of Common Training Framework for European Chartered Engineers, which is foreseen in Article 49 of the new Professional Qualifications Directive was agreed and also other possibilities of cooperation have been discussed during the meeting of the ECCE President and ECEC Secretary General Mr. Klaus Thuriedl.

Honorary event with the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker

A very important Event for the Honorary Award to Jean – Claude Juncker (President of the European Commission) within the European Senate Meeting of the Network/ Group of the Associations of SMEs – “We Entrepreneurs” was held on 16.04.2015 at Dusseldorf/Neuss by the initiative of our ECCE Honorary Vice President Hermann Sturm.

ECCE was represented in the event by the President Włodzimierz Szymczak and the Former President Vassilis Economopoulos who were invited by the organisers.

In this event, our President Włodzimierz Szymczak was awarded as Honorary Senator. Many ECCE contacts and discussions were held in the frame of this event with European and other Organisations representing SMEs and important personalities participating in

this meeting.

The priority of ECCE for Supporting and Promoting the Sustainable Growth of SMEs in Europe was set by the ECCE President from Warsaw General Meeting and our participation in this network-group and its activities is of great importance.

In this direction, the other Honorary Senators previously awarded by the [European Economic Forum \(EWIF\)](#) Members of ECCE Vassilis Economopoulos, Gorazd Humar and Iacint Manoliu will also be activated. Our passed ECCE President Jose Medem was the first ECCE Member awarded as Honorary Senator by EWIF.

The main speakers in this event were the following:

• **WERNER KÜSTERS**

Supervisory Board/ Board of Directors of the Network/ Group of Associations of SMEs “We Entrepreneurs”

• **HANS-JÜRGEN PETRAUSCHKE**

District/County Council of the Rhein-Kreises Neuss County

• **PROF. DR. DRES. H.C. PAUL KIRCHHOF** (key-note speaker)

Judge of the Federal Constitutional Court, Director of the Institute for Finance and Tax Law of the Universi-



Vassilis Economopoulos, Włodzimierz Szymczak and Hermann Sturm



Jean - Claude Juncker and Włodzimierz Szymczak



Jean - Claude Juncker and Vassilis Economopoulos

ty of Heidelberg

• **HERMANN GRÖHE**

Federal Minister of Health

• **JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER**

President of the European Commission

The key-note speaker's, Prof. Dr.

Dres. H.C. Paul Kirchhof, speech title was "The Idea of Europe as an orientation to escape from the Crisis". He spoke about the ideals behind the Idea of Europe: Peace, Freedom and Security. He mentioned that the increasing dissatisfaction among the European populations can jeopardize the peaceful European community "we must make the citizens understand that it is an advantage that our industry/companies are situated in a peaceful area, where legal certainty and freedom of contract dominate".

Jean-Claude Juncker called out to "More Europe, less nation-state". "The citizens are more and more distanced/alienated of what is tak-

ing place/decided in Brussels because they don't understand what we're doing. We're losing in influence and significance from all around the world (he means new upcoming superpowers like China, India etc.) and therefore is not the moment to question the European unity, but in contrast to emphasize it". About the crisis he mentioned: "We have to deal with a Polycrisis, there is fire in every corner" – mentioned about the debt crisis, the migration problem and the demographic declining birth rates.

For more information on this event please visit the link [here](#).

Professor Panaite MAZILU (21 March 1915 - 21 May 2015)



On 21st May 2015 passed away Professor Panaite Mazilu, Honorary member of the Romanian Academy, President of the Union of Associations of Civil Engineers of Romania (UAICR). The sad event took place at exactly two months after his 100th anniversary.

Professor Panaite Mazilu was an outstanding teacher and scientist in the disciplines of Statics, Strength of Materials, Theory of Elasticity, Dynamics and Stability of Structures.

In parallel with the didactic activity, Professor Mazilu was heavily involved in the design of structures, among which landmarks of Bucharest such as the huge "House of Press" (the first tall building in Romania designed to resist to seismic loads, 1954) and the nice building of the Baneasa airport.

Knowing about the big celebration the Romanian community of civil engineers was preparing for the centenary of Professor Panaite Mazilu, Prof. Iacint Manoliu (Chairman of ECCE Standing Committee on Education & Training)

kindly informed ECCE President, Włodzimirz Szymczak about this event and suggested addressing him a message. Prof. Manoliu's suggestion was promptly followed and he had the pleasure to read the following message at the celebration which took place in the beautiful aula of the Central University Library in Bucharest on Friday 20th March 2015.

"Dear Professor Panaite Mazilu,

I am very pleased and honoured to convey you, on my behalf and on behalf of the Executive Board of the European Council of Civil Engineers-ECCE, my warmest congratulations on the occasion of your splendid 100th anniversary. The community of civil engineers of Romania is certainly proud and lucky to have you, a great professor and a bright engineer, as leader.

Your anniversary gives me the opportunity to underline your major interest for the development of cooperation among European civil engineers. Due to your vision and efforts, in May 1996, at the 23rd ECCE General Assembly in Madrid, Romania became the first, among the former socialist countries, to be represented in ECCE. The Union of Associations of Civil Engineers of Romania numbered among the most active members of ECCE. Our colleagues keep remembering the ECCE General

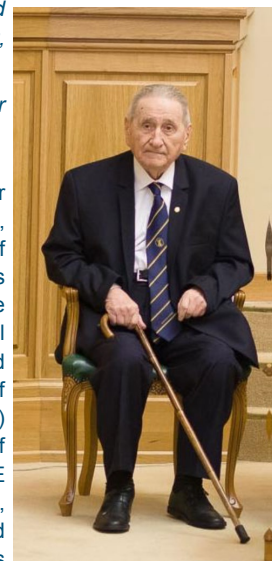
Assemblies marvelously organized and hosted by UAICR in May 1998 and May 2007, when they could meet you and admire your spirit, your unlimited energy.

Happy anniversary, Professor Panaite Mazilu!"

On 16th April 2015, Professor Mazilu sent to ECCE President, Włodzimirz Szymczak, a letter of thanks, in which expressed also his interest in the continuation of the representation of Romanian civil engineers in ECCE and informed that he advised the Association of Civil Engineers of Romania (AICR) to become Associate Member of ECCE. On 27th April 2015, ECCE President, Włodzimirz Szymczak, responded to Professor Mazilu and greeted enthusiastically his efforts to have Romanian civil engineers back to ECCE.

Learning about the decease of Professor Mazilu, ECCE President sent to UAICR and to AICR a letter of condolences.

Prof. Panaite Mazilu despite his age became the bridge to connect again the Romanian Civil Engineers with the European Council of Civil Engineers which probably was one of his last achievements in life. The Association of Civil Engineers of Romania (AICR) became officially an ECCE Associate Member during the 61st ECCE General Meeting, on 30th May, in Naples.



Professor Panaite Mazilu at his 100th Anniversary

“Engineering Days”, Cyprus, 11 May 2015



On 11th May 2014, the last Honorary (closing) Event, took place in Nicosia within a previous time period with group of separate successful events on "Engineering Days" promoting the Visibility of Engineering and the important role of Engineers in the Society, organized by the Technical & Scientific Engineers' Chamber of Cyprus (ETEK).

The key note Speaker of this event was our ECCE Former President Vassilis Economopoulos who presented the subject: "The Engineering Regulated Profession in Europe and worldwide. Challenges and

Perspectives".

The ETEK President Stelios Achniotis made an extensive reference of the whole program and successful events of the Engineering Days organized by ETEK and he insisted on the importance of this program promoting the Engineering Profession to the Society.

The Minister of Transport & Public Works of Cyprus, Mr. Marios Dimitriadis, as well as the Mayor of Nicosia, Konstantinos Giorkatzis, stressed the productive cooperation with ETEK and the contribution of Cypriot Engineers in the Growth and Development of Cyprus.

ECCE Former President Vassilis Economopoulos was awarded by the ETEK for his contribution to the International Engineering Affairs and to the bilateral Cyprus - Greece cooperation, by the ETEK President Stelios Achniotis, and he expressed his great thanks for the close and productive cooperation with all Colleagues Friends Cypriot Delegates in ECCE, ECEC, FEANI, WFEO for many years.

The President of the Association of Civil Engineers of Cyprus Platonas



Stylianoy and George Dimitriou ECCE National Delegate for Cyprus, were also present at this event.

The ETEK President gave also two awards, assigned after competition to the two Groups of Cypriot Engineers succeeding important projects.



Vassilis Economopoulos receiving the award from ETEK President Stelios Achniotis

Know your EU: Directorate General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW)



About DG GROW
The Directorate-General (DG) for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs is the European Commission service responsible for:

- completing the internal market for goods and services;
- helping turn the EU into a smart, sustainable, and inclusive economy by implementing the industrial and sectorial policies of the flagship [Europe 2020 initiative](#);

- fostering entrepreneurship and growth by reducing the administrative burden on small businesses; facilitating access to funding for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); and supporting access to global markets for EU companies. All of these actions are encapsulated in the [Small Business Act](#);
- generating policy on the [protection and enforcement of industrial property rights](#), coordinating

the EU position and negotiations in the international intellectual property rights (IPR) system, and assisting innovators on how to effectively use IP rights;

- delivering the EU's space policy via the two large-scale programmes [Copernicus](#) (European Earth observation satellite system) and [Galileo](#) (European global navigation satellite system), as well research actions to spur technological innovation

and economic growth.

Watch [a video overview of DG GROW activities](#).

Who they are

DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs is based in Brussels and has approximately 1400 staff working under the political leadership of Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska. The Commissioner is also the EU's [SME Envoy](#) tasked with ensuring that all EU policies respect the 'think small first' principle. The DG is managed by Director-General Daniel Calleja.

Under President Juncker, DG works together to achieve cross-cutting objectives, led by the Commission Vice-Presidents. DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs contribute to the following project teams:

- [Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness](#)
- [Digital Single Market](#)
- [Energy Union](#)
- [Euro and Social Dialogue](#)
- [Better Regulation and Interinstitutional Affairs](#)
- [Budget and Human Resources](#)

The priorities of DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

To promote growth in Europe, DG GROW works to:

- Ensure an open internal market for goods and services in the EU;
- Improve the range, quality, and competitiveness of products and services on the internal market;
- Strengthen the industrial base in Europe;
- Provide sector-specific and business-friendly policies;
- Promote industrial innovation to generate new sources of growth;
- Ensure a modernised system for public procurement, which provides better access to public contracts on an EU-wide basis;
- Encourage the growth of SMEs and promote an entrepreneurial culture;
- Support the internationalisation

of EU businesses;

- Facilitate access to finance for SMEs;
- Support the free movement of professionals in EU;
- Support the development of global satellite-based navigation infrastructure and services (Galileo);
- Promote the use of EU earth observation-based services (Copernicus).

DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs' financial support

From 2014 to 2020, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs is responsible for a budget of almost EUR 16 billion to implement:

- The [Programme for Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, COSME](#). The COSME programme has a budget of EUR 2.3 billion to help enterprises access finance and markets, to promote entrepreneurship, and to support favourable conditions for business creation and growth.
- The [Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020](#). This programme is related to space, raw materials, and innovation in SMEs, with [a budget of EUR 2.3 billion](#).
- The [Programme for Satellite Navigation, \(Galileo/EGNOS\)](#), with a budget of EUR 7 billion.
- The [Programme for Global Earth Observation \(Copernicus\)](#), with a budget of EUR 4.3 billion.

External bodies

While DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs maintains policy control of its support programmes, financial management is largely taken care of by:

- the [Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises \(EASME\)](#) which implements the [COSME programme](#) and parts of [Horizon 2020](#) relating to raw materials and innovation in SMEs;
- the [Research Executive Agency \(REA\)](#) which implements aspects of [Horizon 2020](#) relating to

space;

- the [European GNSS Agency \(GSA\)](#) which oversees the Galileo/EGNOS systems by monitoring security and promoting their use by EU citizens;
- the [European Environment Agency \(EEA\)](#) implements part of the [Copernicus](#) programme.

In addition, independent bodies have been entrusted by DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs to implement certain programmes:

- the [European Space Agency \(ESA\)](#) implements the main parts of the Galileo and Copernicus programmes including the construction of space infrastructure;
 - [EUMETSAT](#) implements parts of the Copernicus programme;
 - the [European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts \(ECMWF\)](#) implements part of the Copernicus programme;
 - [Mercator Ocean](#) implements part of the Copernicus programme;
 - the [European Investment Fund \(EIF\)](#) implements part of the COSME programme called 'Financial Instruments'.
- DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs also supervises certain regulatory agencies:
- the [European Chemicals Agency \(ECHA\)](#) which implements the EU's legislation on chemical products;
 - the [Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market \(OHIM\)](#) which is the trademark and designs registry of the European Union.

As part of the Commission's commitment to transparency, the Secretary-General publishes information on meetings held with organisations or self-employed individuals. Read more on information on [meetings held by Director-General Daniel Calleja Crespo](#).

Source: European Commission website <http://ec.europa.eu/>

News from EU

The European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)

Objective

The EFSI aims to overcome the current investment gap in the European Union (EU) by mobilising private financing for strategic investments which the market cannot finance alone. It will support strategic investments in infrastructure as well as risk finance for small businesses.

The fund will focus its financing on investments in infrastructure and innovation, as well as finance for Small- and Medium- sized Enterprises (SMEs).

Key elements

The European Commission expects the Investment Plan will mobilise at least €315 billion in additional investment in Europe over the next three years.

The EU will provide €21 billion in initial funding – a €16 billion guarantee, to be authorised via an [EU Regulation](#) - and the European Investment Bank's (EIB) own resources (€5 billion). The fund will be set up within existing EIB Group structures, allowing it to start quickly and to benefit from the EIB's experience.

The EFSI will have two main focuses: Infrastructure and Innovation (managed by the EIB), and SMEs (managed by the EIB and the EIF).

What is the timeline?

- On 28 May, EU legislators reached [a political agreement](#) on the [Regulation for a European Fund for Strategic Investments](#) (EFSI). This is just four and a half months after the Commission adopted the [legislative proposal](#) on 13 January. Member States unanimously endorsed it on 10 March and the European Parliament voted in committee on 20 April.
- EU Finance Ministers [approved the Regulation](#) at the ECOFIN Council on 19 June, and the European Parliament plenary [voted in favour](#) of the Regulation on 24 June. This allows the EFSI to be operational by Sep-

tember as planned.

- In line with the European Council conclusions of December 2014, which invited the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group to "start activities by using its own funds as of January 2015", the EIB has already [announced](#) several projects to be pre-financed in the context of the Investment Plan for Europe, in which it is the Commission's strategic partner.

What types of projects are eligible for financing?

- Must have high societal and economic value contributing to EU policy objective
- Must attract private capital by addressing market failures.
- Must come on top of existing EIB and EU financing possibilities.
- Must be economically and technically viable.
- Must be consistent with EU state aid rules.
- Some examples of key growth-enhancing areas being targeted by the EFSI are:
 - Infrastructure (transport, energy, digital, environment, urban and social sectors)
 - Education and training, health, R&D, ICT, innovation
 - Renewable energy and energy efficiency
 - Support to SMEs and mid-cap companies.

How can I submit a request for financing?

- Anyone – not just Member States - can submit their request for financing to the [EIB](#) for Infrastructure and Innovation investments, and to the [EIF](#) for SMEs equity or guarantee instruments.
- Project promoters can contact the EIB and EIF directly – they do not need to pass via a local authority or government.

What is the due diligence and project selection process?

- The EIB / EIF will perform the [due diligence analysis](#) of the investment concerned.
- The services of the EIB will seek the approval of the EFSI Investment Committee, which will be responsible for examining potential operations in line with EFSI investment policies and the investment guidelines. They will be responsible for approving the support of the EU guarantee to the EIB in line with EFSI Regulation.
- The EIB / EIF governing bodies will decide on the approval of EIB / EIF financing, in line with EIB / EIF current practices.

How can I contribute as an investor?

- The participation of private sector entities as investors is a key feature of the EFSI.
- Investors could participate in project co-financing, on a risk-sharing basis with EIB covered by EFSI.
- Investors could also participate in Investment Platforms which may be established in the future, notably with the participation of National Promotional Banks.

To find out more, potential investors and project promoters should:

- visit the [EIB website](#)
 - contact infodesk@eib.org
- Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/>

European Commission Priority EU-US Free Trade Agreement

In the 21st century it is anachronistic that Europeans and Americans still impose customs duties on each other's products. These should be eliminated, quickly and completely. The European Commission supports free trade, but not at the price of sacrificing European standards in areas such as food safety, health, social and data protection or cultural diversity. Nor will we allow EU courts' jurisdiction to be

limited by special regimes that limit parties' access to national courts or that allow secret courts to have the final say in disputes between investors and states.

We will insist that negotiations take place in a spirit of mutual trust and transparency. The European Parliament – elected by citizens – will

have the final say on whether an agreement is approved.

Objectives

- Reaching a reasonable and balanced trade agreement between the EU and US to eliminate customs duties.
- Making progress towards mutual

recognition of EU / US product standards or working towards transatlantic standards.

NEWS FROM ECCE MEMBERS

LITHUANIA

How Construction Sector Guidelines are Drafted - Lithuania's Case



BIM Team LT – driving force behind innovations

Photo by Skaitmenine statyba

Soon "The Guidelines for Growth and Development of the Construction Sector in Lithuania for 2015-2020" are to be approved in Lithuania. This will enable Lithuania to keep abreast with the European countries who are trying to understand how this one of the most important sectors of the national economy will be developed and to project the objectives and potential risks in achieving such objectives.

As in many other similar cases, Lithuania is following in footsteps of the countries who are leaders in construction sector, first of all, the United Kingdom. Both the targeted development of the methodology for Building Information Modelling (BIM) and the Government Construction Strategy adopted in 2011 promoted the United Kingdom as a model to be followed by Lithuania.

In Spring 2014, the associations of construction sector established the public institution Digital Construction (Skaitmenine statyba, www.skaitmeninestatyba.lt) aimed at implementing the methodology for building information modelling in Lithuania by coordinated actions. Digital Construction rallied a big team of aficionados who are working consistently in various directions of BIM development. This group of fellows with unofficial

name of BIM Team LT also became a driving force in other processes of construction sector. The work on the subject of BIM revealed that almost all advanced countries in this area have strategies of construction sector thus the time was ripe for this in Lithuania, too.

The Ministry of Environment agreed with that and at the very end of 2014 announced the public procurement tender for drawing up a draft strategy document. It happened at the end of year because there were still unused funds available that were suitable for the matter.

The Ministry of Environment assigned only EUR 17,500 (VAT included) for this project but it wasn't the money that made the aficionados to take the bait; it was the new opportunity to give the construction sector one more push.

The time to complete the task was short and the description of topics and sub-topics for the guidelines was very detailed hinting of a sad perspective of working during Christmas. And so it happened.

Nevertheless, at the end of November an alliance of the Lithuanian Association of Civil Engineers, few associations of construction sector, representatives of Digital Construction and researchers from two universities, i.e. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University and Kaunas University of Technology, won the tender and plunged into work. About 30 people presented their input in the area they knew best.

The result was... a document of 69 pages. It was a very good bank of information and ideas but clearly too long because authors of the

project described in high detail each sub-topic mentioned in the specification.

The Ministry of Environment didn't set any requirements for the volume of the draft and had completely different vision of the document. All those topics and subtopics, as it was found out later, were specified for reference only and didn't call for detailed descriptions.

After everything was cleared up, representatives of the Ministry of Environment and project organizers started working on shortening the document to fewer than 20 pages and the draft will be made available for consideration of the public. Shortly, the guidelines for construction development until 2020 will be approved by the order of the Minister of Environment.

Presenting the vision of Lithuania of its construction sector development in five years is not the aim of this article. It is worth mentioning, though, that demographic issues such as decline in population and ageing society pose a great risk. Moreover, the existing players of the construction market are attracted by the UK and Scandinavian countries where further increase in population is projected.

Therefore, the Lithuania's case could be summarized as follows for countries that do not have any construction sector guidelines yet: convince a ministry responsible for urban development or construction industry to announce a public procurement tender, gather a team of those thinking alike, win the tender and create your own roadmap. No one knows better than you what it should be like.

By Edvinas Butkus

2015: a year of TEN-T challenges for Lithuania

Lithuania is taking part in two exclusive projects of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) simultaneously which are at their peak right now. Rail Baltica should open to Lithuania completely new opportunities of railway transportation while Via Baltica should considerably improve freight transportation by roads.

From Warsaw to Helsinki by train



Rail Baltica is one of the priority projects since it's supposed to link Warsaw, Kaunas, Vilnius, Riga, Tallinn and, using ferry, Helsinki by a continuous rail link. It's also called the major infrastructure project in the history of independent Lithuania and consists of two parts based on the maximum speed: Rail Baltica 1 and Rail Baltica 2.

Rail Baltica 1 is a stretch of the European rail track from the Lithuanian/Polish border to Kaunas with a speed of up to 120 km/hour is projected. In this section a 1435 mm wide European railway line meeting European standards will be built and an existing 1520 mm wide railway line will be reconstructed. The works are expected to be completed by the end of 2015.

Rail Baltica 2 is an individual project of the European railway track (for speeds of up to 240 km/hour). The conclusion of entire Rail Baltica project would make Lithuania along with its capital city Vilnius a part of two railway corridors of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), i.e. Baltic-Adriatic and North Sea Baltics and would enable it to serve a big part of trade flows between the European Union (EU) and third countries.

Focus on environment

Presently, the successful implementation of Rail Baltica 1 from Lithuanian/Polish border is closing Kaunas. The project is implemented by the state-controlled enter-

prise AB Lietuvos geležinkeliai (Lithuanian Railways) which have already invested almost EUR 110 million or 37% of all funds presently assigned for construction from the state boarder to Kaunas. The construction works are carried out by 5 general contractors and 23 sub-contractors.

One of the biggest challenges is the assessment of environmental situation when designing underpasses in Marijampolė (Southern Lithuania). Such things as noise, vibration and pollution caused by railway had to be taken into consideration and compensatory measures had to be designed so that residential conditions were not impaired.

Three modern underpasses were built in Marijampolė.

According to experts, construction of modern tracks involves more than just a renovation of tracks. Modern measures to avoid, minimize or compensate negative environmental effects were applied



during construction. Long rails are used for construction of the European stretch of Rail Baltica which is an effective measure for noise reduction. Moreover, these tracks have shock-absorbing spacers on concrete sleepers.

A close consideration is given to ecological aspects. The old ballast from the track bed is removed and the new one is poured. Then the old one is cleaned and utilized. Wild-life migration over the railway was taken into consideration and special passes were built.

Since the European track must be built next to an existing wide track by widening the existing track bed, everything had to be planned so in the design stage that track bed widening wouldn't affect speed parameters.

Uninterrupted, safe traffic

The task of designing a 1435 mm wide track wasn't that simple. This road and its designated infrastruc-

ture had to be coordinated with the existing railway with a 1520 mm wide track. Difficult technical decisions had to be made based on the international experience to ensure uninterrupted, safe traffic.

Contracting works that would not interrupt the traffic was a serious challenge for both Lietuvos geležinkeliai and the contractors. The task was a success, though, and construction of the railway was carried out without interrupting freight or passenger train traffic.

Another challenge was to get reliable geometric calculations of the route. It was very important to choose such a route that new railway would fit into existing boundaries of the land plot, that underpasses, overpasses and other engineering constructions in the route would meet stringent measurement requirements applicable to railways and that designed railway would meet legislative acts effective in Lithuania and the EU.

Experts carrying out the works of installation of optical fiber and copper communication cables in the Rail Baltica stretch also use latest technologies. The works are carried out using special equipment and no-dig techniques. This ensures a mess-free work without braking asphalt or sidewalks and without interruption or disturbance of the traffic.

Short but complicated section

The team implementing the project had to rally all their capacities for construction of the stretch between Jiesia and Kaunas which was shortest but far from the easiest one. It's only 8 km long but it has three railways running in parallel



and three bridges over Jiesia, Nemumas and Sausvagė rivers thus this work was really complex.

One of the most demanding and complicated works was reconstruction of railway bridge over Nemunas river. It's most challenging technology-wise since this bridge is

an object of cultural heritage. It's not that simple to restore its metal part since even the jointpins have to be authentic.

Kaunas railway station was another object of special focus on the part of the builders since it required an extension of underground pedestrian passage, building a new platform, new trackbed for the European track with culverts, supporting and noise-absorbing walls, and reconstruction of all alarm and electric installations.

Unprecedented volume of works

It's expected that after completing all Rail Baltica 1 works, 18 bridges and 4 viaducts, 125 shunts, 34 crossings and 90 culverts will be reconstructed, installed and built. The contractors will also fix 6 railway stations and 18 platforms.

These works will be carried out in two years by 1,000 workers using about 700 units of various digging, construction and railway building equipment and machines.

In total 30 thousand tonnes of metal will be used for building the rail-

way, bridges and other objects as well as 800 thousand tonnes of ballast.

Digging works of almost 1.5 million cubic meters in volume will be completed. The price of the project is EUR 370 million. The project is jointly financed from the budget of the Republic of Lithuania, by AB Lietuvos geležinkeliai, EU Cohesion Fund and TEN-T program.

Via Baltica: big changes

Via Baltica between Latvia and Lithuania stretches for 274 km. In Lithuania it's one of the most traffic-intensive international highways which belong to TENT-T. This highway is very important for the development of logistics and freight transportation business both in Lithuania and neighboring countries.

This important artery of road transportation is about to overcome major changes. In spring 2015 a contracting agreement was signed for reconstruction works that are expected to be completed in 10 months since the effect of the

agreement, i.e. by the end of 2015.

The stretch from Kaunas to Lithuanian/Polish border (road A5) should be reconstructed and turned into a highway by renovating two existing traffic lanes and building 2 new ones (2+2). The reconstruction of existing interchanges and building of new ones is also planned as well as renovation of bridges and viaducts, building of tunnels and connecting roads using environmental and traffic safety measures.

In the stretch between Panevėžys and Kaunas (road A8), road paving structure should be reinforced, junctions reconstructed, bus stops and walkways built, lighting installed, connecting roads constructed, tunnel reconstructed and environmental measures implemented.

Written by:

Ričardas Slapšys, Advisor to Minister of Transportation and Communications

MALTA

SBE 16 Malta | Call for Abstracts

Abstract Submission: 31st July 2015

SBE 16 MALTA | Europe and the Mediterranean: Towards a Sustainable Built Environment

Dear Colleague,

We would like to welcome you to SBE 16 Malta (Valletta MALTA, 16th-18th March 2015)

www.sbe16malta.org

We would like to encourage you to submit your abstract until the 31st July 2015 and to present your work at the SBE16 Conference in Malta. Please find attached further details on the SBE 16 Malta Conference, or visit www.sbe16malta.org for further information.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The International event forms part of the 2016 International Sustainable Built Environment Conference Series convened under the auspices of the four international organizations: iiSBE, CIB, UNEP-SBCI and FIDIC.

SBE16_Malta will be the first international conference addressing a

Sustainable Built Environment in Europe and the Mediterranean Region.

SBE16 Malta will be an International, full-paper peer-reviewed conference with a focus on different aspects of Sustainability in the Built Environment.

All papers, oral presentations and posters shall be in English. All papers accepted by the Scientific Committee and presented at the Conference in oral or poster form will be published in a book of Proceedings with an ISBN. All accepted papers will be indexed in international scientific databases.

The main results of the SBE16 Malta Conference can also be presented at the World Congress (WSBE) 2017 in Hong Kong.

The conference shall deal with the main challenges faced by both developed and developing countries in Europe and the Mediterranean in addressing the goals of sustainable development. These objectives shall be evaluated in the context of regional, climatic and cultural differences.

The conference shall serve as an

important forum for sharing the latest innovation and best practice strategies towards a Sustainable Built Environment.

The SBE16 Malta event includes the International Scientific Conference, the Green Building Exhibition and Community Outreach.

The local organizer is SBE (Sustainable Built Environment) Malta the iiSBE Malta Chapter, in collaboration with the University of Malta, the Building Industry Consultative Council (BICC) of the Government of Malta and the Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change of Malta.

VENUE

The conference shall be held at: The Excelsior Hotel (5 star) in Floriana, Malta, located at the entrance of the UNESCO World Heritage City of Valletta, the Capital City of Malta (European Capital of Culture 2018) and overlooking Marsamxett Harbour.



The Conference venue is located in a central area and can easily be reached by the public transport system.

CONFERENCE TOPICS

- Materials Engineering for sustainable buildings
- Building Systems and Processes, Energy efficient
- Urban Regeneration and Spatial Planning
- Sustainable Refurbishment and Regeneration of the Built Environment, Cultural Heritage
- Building Assessment Methods, Tools and Simulations
- Renewable Energy Sources and the Built Environment

- Intelligent Buildings
- Socio-Economic considerations and a Sustainable Built Environment, Education in Sustainable Construction.

CALL FOR ABSTRACT

Abstracts between 150–250 words in English shall be registered into conference electronic system accessible, using the abstract template provided in the Submission section at: www.sbe16malta.org until the 31st July 2015. Information on the acceptance of the abstracts and on the preparation of full papers will be given by the 15th September 2015.

IMPORTANT DATES

- 1st June 2015 Call for papers opening

- 30th July 2015 Abstract submission
- 15th September 2015 Acceptance notification
- 1st November 2015 Full paper submission
- 15th December 2016 Results of full paper review process
- 1st February 2016 Submission of final papers.

You can find more details at www.sbe16malta.org. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at contactus@sbemalta.org

We are looking forward to receiving your abstract and meeting you next year in MALTA.

POLAND

The EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CONGRESS – Visions of economic development for Europe and Poland

The European Economic Congress (20-22 April 2015) is an annual debate between politicians and businesspeople from Poland and Europe, called by some “the Polish Davos Forum”. It is the most important annual economic event of that type in Central Europe.



Bronisław Komorowski President of Poland

Picture by: www.eecpoland.eu

The future and the economic strength of Europe as well as its role in the global economy strongly depend on the use of the potential of the market populated by 500 million people. Effective performance of the EU Single Market calls for the elimination of hidden barriers within Member States, as well as huge investments, e.g. in transport infrastructure. The future of Europe lies in innovation, investments and reindustrialization of

Member State economies. In the future, European economies should not rely so heavily on services and consumption. Growth and stabilization of employment, investments in research and development, focus on green energy, with more and more frequent and intensive economic interactions between different cultures were the key items on the agenda of the European Economic Congress this year. The most discussed subject was how to attract investors to Europe and what to do to make their investments pay off. How to make Europe competitive? These were the key themes contemplated by the participants of numerous debates held in a newly built congress center in Katowice. In the years to come, civil engineers will play a pivotal role in building a modern Europe. Our demand for highly qualified experts who are able to tackle the challenges of the 21st century will continue to increase.

This year's edition of the Congress was attended by four European Union Commissioners, as well as a large number of politicians, including Bronisław Komorowski, the President of the Republic of Poland. Further, six ministers from the Polish government and ministers from other EU Member States participated in the discussions. In addition to them, almost 200 CEOs and vice-CEOs of the world's largest

companies, undertakings and institutions arrived and took part in discussions attended by almost 7,500 panel participants.

European Context — *the key objective of the Juncker Plan is to deepen and broaden the EU Single Market*

At the opening of the Congress, all attendees listened intently to a speech given by **Jyrki Katainen**, European Commission Vice-President, who stressed that the investment plan for Europe named the Juncker Plan would leverage €300 billion from public and private funds, and its aftermath would definitely have some effect on the situation of engineers in Europe. Its key points are to deepen and broaden the EU Single Market and to assist in the reindustrialization of European economies. It is expected that the share of industry in the GDP of the EU should increase from 16 to 20% by 2020.

Jyrki Katainen emphasized that structural funds would not suffice if we failed to overcome hidden barriers that discourage the private sector from investing in Europe. Therefore, the European Commission will focus primarily on the harmonization of legislation to create a level playing field for all economic operators, while the legal risk will be mitigated in order to mobilize the private sector to take investment risks.

Only when the internal market is really harmonized, we will be able to utilize the pipeline of European-level infrastructure projects, which is under development. The implementation of investment projects will be possible owing to support from the European Investment Bank provided through the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). The projects are meant to be attractive and innovative from the investors' perspective. However, we must note that some of them will bear increased risk. The public-private partnership formula will be preferred, and infrastructure projects will include, among other things: transport, energy networks, renewable energy projects, as well as research and development.

Ending his address, the Commissioner called entrepreneurs to speak up and advise the European Commission on how the European market should be regulated, as in practice business people know best where barriers exist that must be eliminated.

Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, spoke in a similar vein, being more direct in expressing and presenting the concerns and challenges that could be faced by the Juncker Plan. The Commissioner emphasized and warned that *"if all of us do not realize (the speech was addressed to governments, politicians and economic operators) that we have a population of 500 million in Europe and that there should be a single European market, Europe will soon — perhaps in the mid-term — lose its competitive power. (...) Any measure taken by a country government to protect its own market (...) weakens the European Union as a whole"*. According to Ms. Bieńkowska, the focus should be primarily on structural reforms, as money alone is not enough.

Other politicians present at the Congress expressed their agreement, stressing the importance of convincing investors that Europe is a safe place to invest. Otherwise, they would choose other markets of the world as their investment targets. To this end, stabilization in the energy sector and establishment of a secure market for energy supply are also necessary and essential, especially achieving independence from Russian oil. Investments associated with Com-

missioner Juncker's plan involve both research projects and construction projects with the participation of civil engineers (with varying levels of responsibility). This will surely offer an opportunity to gain new experience, skills, the challenge lying in the shared responsibility for the modernization of the economic infrastructure. It is civil engineers who will be responsible



European Economic Congress

Picture by: www.eecpoland.eu

for the development of new, safe and advanced transport infrastructure.

Innovation was another theme of importance to Europe's future. It was one of the most frequently used words, by politicians and entrepreneurs alike. In the European context, it was discussed, inter alia, by Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science.

He stressed that Europe's development journey is a process that should be seen as a whole, from research all the way to business solutions. In the future, innovative economy and new ways of tackling new challenges will drive economic growth in Europe.

Investing in research or even in entire business processes involving groups of scientists working on innovative projects that will be subsequently implemented — this is Europe's path towards success. Further, Europe needs an effective and harmonized education system, adapted to market needs, also in the context of civil engineers, structural designers or architects. The technological development of Europe as a whole requires highly qualified and educated experts representing various fields to join forces in research projects for which stable funding must be ensured.

Europe has a great development potential, Mr. Moedas stressed, mentioning that 7% of all compa-

nies worldwide are located in Europe but as much as 30-40% of knowledge is generated here. This, according to the Commissioner, offers a huge innovation potential.

Most importantly, the private sector needs to be attracted to the research and innovation program by offering appropriate incentives for private operators. What is more, politicians are aware that there are invisible barriers to business, and therefore a system of incentives and smart laws must be established.

Investors allocate their money where the conditions are more favorable. If they do not choose Europe, for some reason, and they invest in America, it means that the investing climate in Europe is poor and needs to be changed. However, it must be stressed that the best and most remarkable industry experts look for developmental opportunities in those countries that can offer appropriate working and pay conditions. United States have been competing for top-notch experts for years, often offering more than Europe can give. The famous Silicon Valley in the US can serve as an example here. What is more, the American tendency towards imbalance on the labor market, with a constant demand for good experts, engineers, technicians, could attract migration from Europe. Highly qualified civil engineers are also becoming scarce in Europe and concerns have arisen that the imbalance may deepen over time.

Polish Context – *within the next 10 years, Polish economy has the chance to find its way into the top ten most innovative economies of the European Union.*

In the opening address, Bronisław Komorowski, the President of Poland, declared that within the next 10 years, Polish economy has the chance to find its way into the top ten most innovative economies of the European Union. The essence is, on the one hand, to build trust between economic operators and state authorities, and on the other hand, to be a loyal taxpayer. The President reminded that he had already proposed amendments to the rules of the General Tax Code in respect of the principle that in situations where tax rules were lacking clarity, any concerns should be resolved with the taxpayer's

interest in mind. To promote innovation in Poland, the President proposed a bill to the lower house of the Parliament (the Sejm), offering innovation-related tax advantages to those companies that invest in research and development. This initiative was appreciated by foreign Congress attendees.

People emphasized that due to the climate policy of the EU, the energy sector in Poland will have to adapt to the new reality. Questions about the future were asked. It was stressed that for sure customers would gain importance on the energy market, and the EU climate policy would force some changes. The belatedness of the Polish energy sector in this area is now being addressed, and power plants need to invest in new MW capacities, as a large part of them are 40 or even 60 years old, some actually nearing the end of their days, and the economy is developing and growing despite the slowdown seen in the recent years. Poland is anyway Europe's biggest construction site in the energy context. New coal-fired power plants are being built, and their planned energy efficiency can be even 10 percent higher than that of the older plants.

Coal mining has been and will be a critical sector for Poland, as Polish economy is coal-based and will continue to rely on coal in the near term. In this context, it will be important to develop technologies supporting the improvement of economic efficiency and changes towards regaining profitability in the Polish mining sector, which has recently found itself in a very difficult situation.

The participants of the debate reiterated that low-emission economy

did not imply low-carbon economy. A lot depends on the manner in which the coal is processed and on the development of technologies improving the environmental sustainability of mining and such mining techniques that, for example, improve the level of capture and utilization of methane released from mining operations.

It was stressed during the discussion that in the new financial perspective, a lot of money would be allocated for the development and modernization of road and railway infrastructure in Poland and throughout Europe. One of the panels featured a discussion on a transport corridor linking the north and south of Europe, running from Helsinki across Baltic States and Poland to the south of the continent. The investment would consume more than €50 billion, and its completion could improve the cohesion of the internal market in Europe and establish economic links between currently detached regions. Civil engineers will create the entire infrastructure that could spark up the commercial and economic development of eastern EU Member States. Let's hope that decision makers, both at the EU and national levels, are capable of implementing this far-reaching plan.

Business contacts of Polish and European companies, and Europe as a whole, in cooperation with the United States, China and Asia, Africa or South America were another important discussion theme.

Examples of practices that engage engineers in new projects include the involvement of Polski Koncern KGHM in investment projects outside Europe. For engineers en-

gaged in investment projects in South America by such companies as KGHM, it means acquiring new experience. In addition, new challenges arise in the day-to-day cooperation between Polish engineers and representatives of other cultures, who have somewhat different behaviour patterns and habits. Business relies on collaboration and trust, and where there is confusion linked to intercultural relations, misunderstandings with business partners are not uncommon.

To summarise, during this year's edition of the European Economic Congress, the importance of creating a good climate for economic dialogue between politicians and the business, and building confidence of the business sector in the plans developed by politicians, were repeatedly pointed out. The most important things are communication, dialogue, better understanding of the plans of the European Commission which will involve economic operators — this is an unquestionable asset of the Congress. What will be the effect of the Juncker Plan on European engineers? We will see. One thing is certain; the plan cannot be implemented without the active engagement and inclusion of the entire civil engineering and science sector. It is a good prospect for civil engineers. Poland is advantaged too, as immense structural funds have been allocated to it for the coming seven years. What is undoubtedly a challenge for Poland and the EU as a whole is to spend money in such a way as to ensure the development of infrastructure, but also to spur innovation in EU economies.

SLOVAKIA

Slovak Chamber of Civil Engineers Will Educate Middle and Senior Level Professionals in the Area of Energy Efficiency with the Support of EU HORIZON 2020 Programme

Bratislava, Slovakia, May 5, 2015 – The Slovak Chamber of Civil Engineers (SKSI) will increase the qualification of building professionals in the field of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in buildings with the support from EU funds. The aim of the

project ingREeS is to prepare the training courses for targeted professionals, create the network of the trainers for the delivery of training programs and 400 professionals from Slovakia and 300 from the Czech Republic will be trained on energy efficiency by the end of the project.

Education and training programs on energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in buildings are to be prepared for the targeted professions, namely: engi-

neers, architects, planners, site managers, construction site supervisors and professionals in the area of energy efficiency of the buildings.

“Our Chamber supports the education of professionals in the construction field, as this is the way to achieve our aims and efforts to create conditions for the safe and high-quality constructions. The ingREeS project builds on the already completed Pillar I BUILD UP Skills project, results of which will



be utilized and will contribute to the success of our project” said the President of SKSI, Vladimír Benko.

By participating on this project, the Chamber has become involved in fulfilment of the Roadmap for setting up lifelong education system ensuring the development of skills essential for workers in the construction sector for the fulfilment of the Europe 2020 energy targets, to be specific, in the area of increasing energy efficiency, decreasing greenhouse gases and the use of renewable energy sources.

All nine partners from Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Austria involved in the project ingREeS met at the Kick-Off Meeting at the end of March in Bratislava. The meeting was also joined by Alessandro Proia, Project Advisor from the European Commission’s Agency EASME. “Involving three EU countries in this project as a new ap-

proach to Horizon 2020 projects and the use of its direct link to the project realized before were among the reasons why the European Commission decided to provide funding for our project” added Diana Krížová, Project Manager.

Within the project, the Graz University of Technology, the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna, the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava and the National Institute of Lifelong Learning will prepare education programs for the above mentioned professionals. Chamber intends to incorporate the education programmes into the lifelong learning project for SKSI Members and experts in the field of energy efficiency of buildings in Slovakia. The Association of Construction Entrepreneurs of Slovakia and ViaEuropa Competence Centre, s.r.o., will

propose measures to motivate employers to invest into training in this area as well as incentives boosting demand for highly qualified professionals.

With the support of Czech partners - the Association of Building Entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic and SEVEN - The Energy Efficiency Center, the database of trainers, who will be trained within the project as well, will be created.

Each education and training program for professionals in the construction field in Slovakia and the Czech Republic will be followed by an examination and obtaining a certificate. The project was launched by its Kick-Off Meeting and will run for the following 36 months, until 2018.

[Photos from the Kick-Off Meeting of Project Partners \(March 24-25, 2015, Bratislava, Slovakia\)](#)

Project title:

Setting up Qualification and Continuing Education and Training Scheme for Middle and Senior Level Professionals on Energy Efficiency and Use of Renewable Energy Sources in Buildings – *ingREeS*

Project partners:

Slovak Chamber of Civil Engineers (SK) - Lead Partner
 Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (SK)
 Association of Construction Entrepreneurs of Slovakia (SK)
 National Institute of Lifelong Learning (SK)
 ViaEuropa Competence Centre, s.r.o. (SK)
 University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (AT)
 Graz University of Technology (AT)
 Association of Building Entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic (CZ)
 SEVEN - Energy Efficiency Center (CZ)

Starting date: March 1, 2015
Duration: 36 months
EU Programme: HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme
Total budget: 1,399,622.72 €



This project has received funding from the *European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme* under grant agreement No 649925-*ingREeS*.

SLOVENIA

“International Conference - MOVING BEYOND RISKS: Organizing for Resilience”

16.09.2015 – 17.09.2015, Bled, Slovenia

This conference is a serious attempt and a unique opportunity for all interested to connect with academic experts, policy makers and practitioner from various often-competing fields and perspectives (including High reliability organiz-

ing, Resilience engineering and Risk management) for developing holistic responses to growing resilience problems. Our goal is to engage with academic communities, policy-makers and key industrial sectors from around the world and to present state-of-the-art research findings and industry’s best practices.

The main organizers of the conference are the International Institute

for Transdisciplinary Research on Critical Infrastructure (i-RESC), the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and the Building Research Establishment (BRE, Center for Resilience) with the support of Slovenian Chamber of Engineers (IZS), Section of Civil Engineers.

THE CONFERENCE THEME

We live in turbulent times and our lives depend on increasingly com-

plex systems and organisations at the backdrop of high expectations in safety, reliability and quality. **Moving beyond risks: Organising for Resilience** is about all those programmes, projects, studies and practices that are aimed at improving the capabilities of organisations, teams, networks and sectors:

- To sense the unexpected and unwanted earlier
- To respond more effectively to those events

- To reduce the negative outcomes if these events or situations unfold
- To learn continuously from misinterpretations, miscommunications and misunderstanding

For further information, please see the conference website at www.beyond-risks-conference.eu, or contact Mrs. Mateja Zorc via e-mail: mateja.zorc@i-resc.eu.



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**“Civil Engineers at the Heart of Society
Building Life Quality and a Sustainable
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The European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE) was created in 1985 out of the common concern of the professional bodies for Civil Engineers in Europe that the Civil Engineers working together across Europe could offer much more to assist Europe advance its built Environment and protect the natural environment.

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