

**FIEC** is the European Construction Industry Federation, representing via its 31 National Member Federations in 27 countries (25 EU & EFTA and Turkey) construction enterprises of all sizes, i.e. small and medium-sized enterprises as well as “global players”, carrying out all forms of building and civil engineering activities.



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Construction industry remains on right track

**FIEC reports a 3.5% growth in activity in the overall EU construction industry in 2018 and forecasts a 2.2% growth in 2019.**

*“Although the situation continues to vary from one country to the other, the overall picture is currently positive, with activity in new housebuilding even booming in several countries.”* said FIEC President Kjetil Tønning, presenting construction’s annual statistics. *“In 2018, overall construction output in the EU amounted to €1,427 billion, which represents 9.0% of EU GDP. This is an encouraging increase of 3.5% compared to 2017.”* reported Tønning.

According to FIEC’s statistics, developments in the EU show the following results overall:

- Behind the overall figure for the EU, there are still disparities between Member States, but only a minority of countries experienced a drop in the construction activity. Others, like Italy (+1.5%), Portugal (+3.5%) and Spain (+5.9%) are recovering, but these increases in activity are measured against historically low baselines.
- The main driving forces in 2018 were the new housebuilding (+4.0%) and civil engineering (+4.7%) segments. Recovery in the latter segment is a sign that the investment policy launched under the Juncker Commission is starting to have an impact, although this is certainly not the only driver.
- Renovation and maintenance (R&M) activity remained stable throughout the crisis, thus having an important cushioning effect for the entire construction sector. This trend is now slowing down, as new construction is taking the lead again. But still, in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis, R&M represents a bigger share of the overall construction activity, compared to new housebuilding (i.e. 25.8% against 22.7%).
- The level of employment in the construction industry increased again in 2018 (+1.8%). Altogether, construction provides jobs for 14.8 million people – working in more than 3.3 million companies – which represents 6.4% of Europe’s total employment. Against this backdrop, in several countries, the shortage in skilled labour is already seen as an obstacle for the sector’s future growth.

*Tønning recalled “We advocate that there cannot be growth without investment. We therefore welcome the positive outcomes of the Investment Plan for Europe in terms of boosting both public and private investment and we support very much the continuation of such investment policy during the next EU’s financial programming period (2021-2027) via the InvestEU programme!”*

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