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FIEC – EFBWW

Joint press release on Statement on COVID-19 crisis

COVID-19 - EU social partners ask for practical and adequate sanitary measures for the construction industry

FIEC and EFBWW, the European social partners of the construction industry, released joint recommendations addressed to national social partners, national authorities and the EU institutions.

In particular, FIEC and EFBWW call on national social partners to negotiate practical solutions with their national authorities in order to allow the continuation or the restart of construction activities in compliance with national specific H&S measures, keeping the health and safety of the workers as the highest priority.

The joint recommendations prioritize the health, safety and hygienic conditions of the construction workers and help entrepreneurs affected by the crisis, while taking into account:

- the continuity of activities without jeopardizing workers' health and safety and to prevent significant financial losses for construction companies;
- the absorption of the negative social and economic consequences of this COVID-19 crisis and its possibly longer-term impact, in order to avoid job losses;
- the necessity to negotiate arrangements between workers' representatives and employers' representatives at national and company level;
- resumption of construction activities, while respecting the highest standards of occupational safety and health;
- recovery actions to ensure the sustainability of the construction industry;

In case posted workers pursue their economic activities, the recommendations stipulate that this must be done under safe and healthy conditions regarding their accommodation, transportation and working environment, in line with the Commission's guidelines on free mobility under COVID-19 circumstances.

In case activities cannot continue, FIEC and EFBWW also recommend initiatives from public authorities to make sure that construction companies and their workers can economically and financially cope with the current crisis.

Note to the editor:

FIEC is the European Construction Industry Federation, representing via its 32 national member federations in 28 European countries (25 EU & Norway, Ukraine and Turkey) construction enterprises of all sizes (from one person craftsmen and SMEs through to large international firms), carrying out all forms of building and civil engineering activities. This wide-ranging representativeness was officially recognised in a study undertaken on behalf of the European Commission so that FIEC is the "Social Partner" representing employers in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue "Construction".

The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) is the European Workers' Industry Federation for the following sectors: building, woodworking, forestry and allied industries and trades. The EFBWW has 75 affiliated unions in 34 countries and represents a total of two million members. The EFBWW is a member organisation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and works in close cooperation with the Building and Woodworkers' International (BWI). The Federation's main task is to represent its affiliates in Europe and help them defend the rights and interests of the workers in the industries it covers.