

Press release

The European social partners of the construction industry ask the Latvian Parliament to support the national collective agreement for the construction industry

3.12.2018. The Latvian social partners of the construction industry (the Latvian Building sector trade union and the “Partnership of Latvian Construction Entrepreneurs”) have demonstrated a great sense of responsibility to improve the competitiveness and the sustainability of the Latvian construction industry, by signing on 10th of May a first sectoral collective agreement, which improves the living standards of all Latvian construction workers.

Clear evidence has demonstrated that countries in which the national social partners of the construction industry are willing and able to take their share of responsibility to jointly regulate the labour market, they are able to reduce undeclared labour, improve the professional qualifications and at the same time improve the competitiveness of their companies.

Collective agreements are considered as an important tool to secure employment in current and future types of working arrangements, allowing flexibility and ensuring a level playing field between companies.

Despite the agreement reached by the Latvian social partners of the construction industry, the legislator is hesitant to approve the required changes in the Latvian labour code.

The EFBWW and FIEC regret this situation and in support of their respective national affiliates they call the Latvian Parliament to accept the required changes in the Latvian labour code, which are needed to ensure that the Latvian collective agreement for the construction industry can be made generally applicable to all construction workers and companies. This will strongly contribute to a sectoral level playing field and is an important step towards a sustainable construction industry.

Dietmar Schäfers, President of the EFBWW *“Welcomes the impressive economic progress of the Latvian construction industry. Over the next decade the industry will be confronted with many challenges, such as the need for qualified workers, preventing fraud and abuse, stimulating sustainable growth... The Latvian national sectoral social partners in particular are able to offer a more tailored and concrete approach to solve the real issues at stake. Now, the Latvian Parliament holds the cards: will it deal in favour of progress or a standstill?”*

Kjetil Tønning, President of FIEC *“The development and support of sectoral industrial relations, as well as the autonomy of the social partners, have always been and will continue to be a high priority on our agenda. We strongly believe that the officially recognised social partners are best placed to adequately take into account the specific needs of our industry and to define the most appropriate frame for ensuring its competitiveness and long-term sustainability.”*

The European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) is the European Trade Union Federation for the construction and wood sectors. The EFBWW represents 1.5 million workers from 31 countries and 77 national trade unions.

The European construction Industry federation (FIEC) through its 31 national members in 27 European countries represents construction enterprises of all sizes (from one person craftsmen and SMEs through to large international firms), from all building and civil engineering specialties.

The EFBWW and FIEC are officially recognised by the European Commission as the European sectoral social partners for the construction industry.

Contact details: Mr Werner Buelen, EFBWW, wbuelen@efbh.be and Mr Domenico Campogrande, FIEC, d.campogrande@fiiec.eu