



CONCRETE PERSPECTIVES

December 2015

Internal News

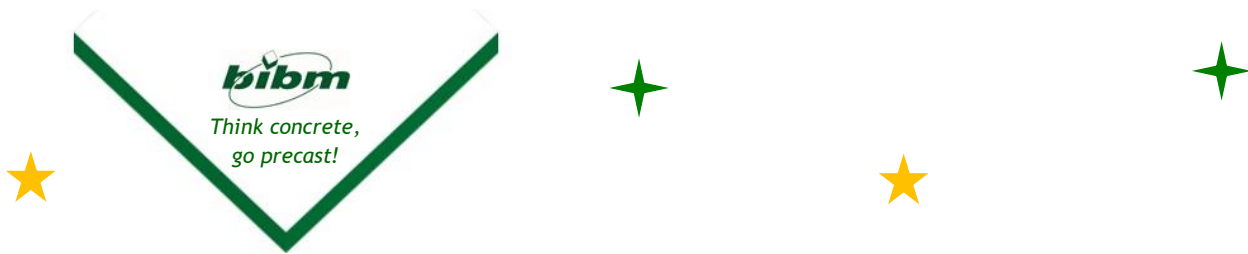
The Concrete Initiative - Thematic Lunch 'Modernising buildings and infrastructure- -a smart mix of new, rebuilt and renovated construction works'

On 3 December- Participants included representatives from both Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs and Directorate-General for Energy of the European Commission as well as the Permanent Representation of Spain, the Belgian Demolition Association and experts in the field of sustainable development from industry and academia.

During the debate the participants explored drivers for achieving an energy efficient and sustainable building and infrastructure stock.

For further information and pictures about the event, please visit the [webpage of the event](#).





Construction sector

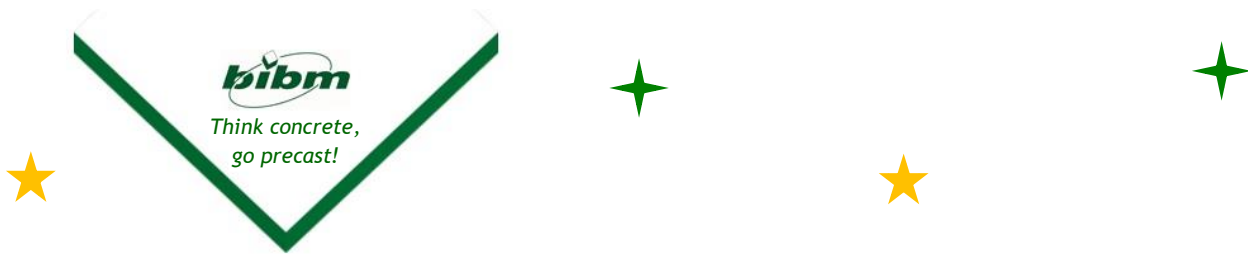
- The University of Dundee will hold next year (4-6 July 2016) the 9th International Concrete Conference with the theme “Environment, Efficiency and Economic Challenges for Concrete”. There is an open call for papers for several thematic areas.
For further information please visit: <http://www.ctucongress.co.uk/>.
- On 4 December 2015, the European Construction Industry Federation ([FIEC](#)) published its [Manifesto](#) with ten points for climate change construction solutions:
 1. Promote energy efficiency of Europe’s built environment
 2. Strengthen cities’ and territories’ resilience to climate change
 3. Promote low carbon and climate resilient infrastructure and buildings
 4. Encourage contractual innovation
 5. Promote technical and technological innovation
 6. Focus financing on sustainability
 7. Strengthen network interconnectivity
 8. Support training and upgrading of skills
 9. Encourage the use of low-carbon and recycled products
 10. Engage with the circular economy
- On 3 December 2015, the [Global Alliance on Buildings and Construction](#) was launched under the leadership of UNEP. The alliance aims at:
 - a) Helping to put the buildings and construction sector on the “below 2 °C path”
 - b) Aligning existing initiatives, partnerships, commitments and programmes to achieve greater scale and increase the pace of efficiency actions
 - c) Catalysing stronger collaboration and targeting sectoral and cross sectoral climate action and solutions for all

The European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC) joined the alliance on 4 December 2015.

- On 4 December 2015, the consultancy [Ecofys](#) published a report it drafted for the European Commission DG Energy entitled “[Assessment of cost optimal calculations in the context of the EPBD](#)” according to which in about two thirds of the Member States the national assessment of the cost optimal performance level revealed potential to introduce more ambitious energy performance standards while achieving lower life cycle costs for buildings.



- The ECO-Platform implemented a new option on [their webpage](#) when looking for EPDs. From now on, it is possible to search ECO Platform EPDs according to their reference number, program operator, title, manufacturer, product family, LCA practitioner, database used and issue and expiration date.



Live from the European Union

Final set of six macro objectives have been identified - EU framework of core indicators

On 22 December, the European Commission gave the latest update about the project “Development of a common EU framework of indicators for the environmental performance of buildings”.

The Commission confirmed that as a result of the valuable input from the main stakeholder group participants, together with the many written submissions (the European Concrete Platform submitted its comments); the final set of six macro objectives have been identified and will be translated into indicators during 2016.

The final, revised working paper ‘Identifying macro-objectives for the life cycle environmental performance and resource efficiency of EU buildings’ will shortly be available on the project website:

http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Efficient_Buildings/documents.html

There are two main categories:

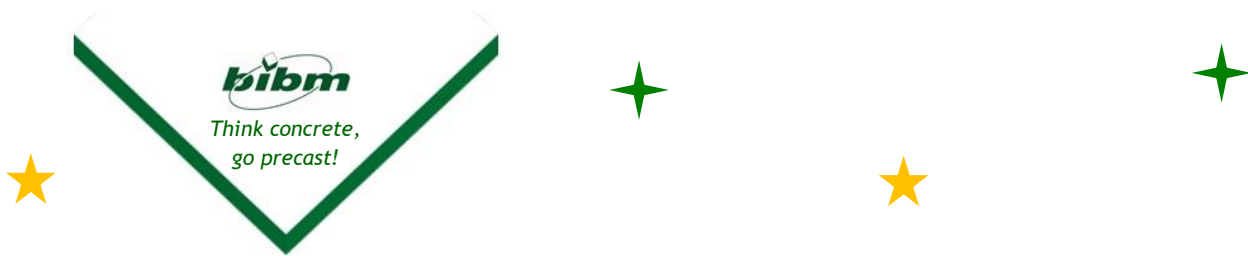
1. life cycle environmental performance
2. quality, performance and value of buildings

Three of each type will be developed into the six performance indicators that will cover the first version of the EU common framework.

Rapporteur for landfill of waste and waste directives announced

On 23 December, the European Parliament’s [Environmental Committee](#) announced that the Rapporteur of both waste directives will be [Simona Bonafe MEP](#) (S&D, Italy), who was also appointed as the Rapporteur of the old waste directive before it was withdrawn in December 2014.

On 21 December, during the [exchange of views](#) with Commissioner Vella (Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) in the Environmental Committee, she welcomed the holistic approach and said that this package represents a more balanced view than the old one, which was only about waste. She added that the circular economic package is not only waste or environmental policy, but also economic policy and covers all stakeholders. She went on declaring that the package contains some new development models and industrial measures based on e.g. competitiveness, sustainability.



However she also expressed her disappointment and joined her colleagues to complain about the ambition of the new package which is perceived to be less ambitious than expected.

She underlined that the targets are not ambitious enough and that the directives are weak in terms of waste prevention due to lack of targets.

At the same time she added, that realising the weak points about the Directives will help the Committee's work to table amendments and present a more ambitious proposal.

The circular economy package contains Amending Directives on waste 2015/0275 (COD); Amending Directives on landfill of waste 2015/0274 (COD and Action Plan for circular economy COM (2015)/614.

The two waste directives will follow the ordinary legislative procedure. There are no dates announced yet for the further legislative steps.

Draft Annual Union Work Programme for European standardisation for 2016 published

In accordance with The Single Market Strategy, at the end of October 2015, the European Commission published the [Communication on Upgrading the single market: more opportunities for people and business" / \(COM 2015\) 550 final/](#). The document outlines the modernization of the European standardization system and foresees that EC will propose and agree in 2016 on a 'Joint initiative on Standardization'.

With this in mind, on 21 December 2015, the European Commission DG GROW published its [draft Annual Union Work Programme for European standardisation for 2016](#).

By the end of 2016, the European Commission wants to launch the development of:

1. Harmonised standards and introduction of thresholds/classes of performance in new and revised harmonised standards on construction products;
2. Assessment methods related to essential characteristics of the product performance related to Basic Requirements on Construction Works under the CPR

The end of 2018 was indicated as deadline for delivery by the standardisers.



National Award Winner Projects

[Precast in Buildings Award 2015](#) - Belgium

A passive kindergarten and primary school won the Precast in Building Award 2015 in Belgium, situated in Antwerp. The building was built with architectural concrete sandwich panels. The building displays an abstemious and regular façade that combines concrete with other materials such as wood.

The construction kept a tight deadline in order to be functional for the new school year for September 2015. Thanks to prefabrication, the construction of 8,400 m² lasted only six months .

Client & project developer : AG Vespa Antwerpen

Architect: BURO II & ARCHI + I

General Contractor: Van Laere

Precaster : Loveld Aalter - Urbastyle



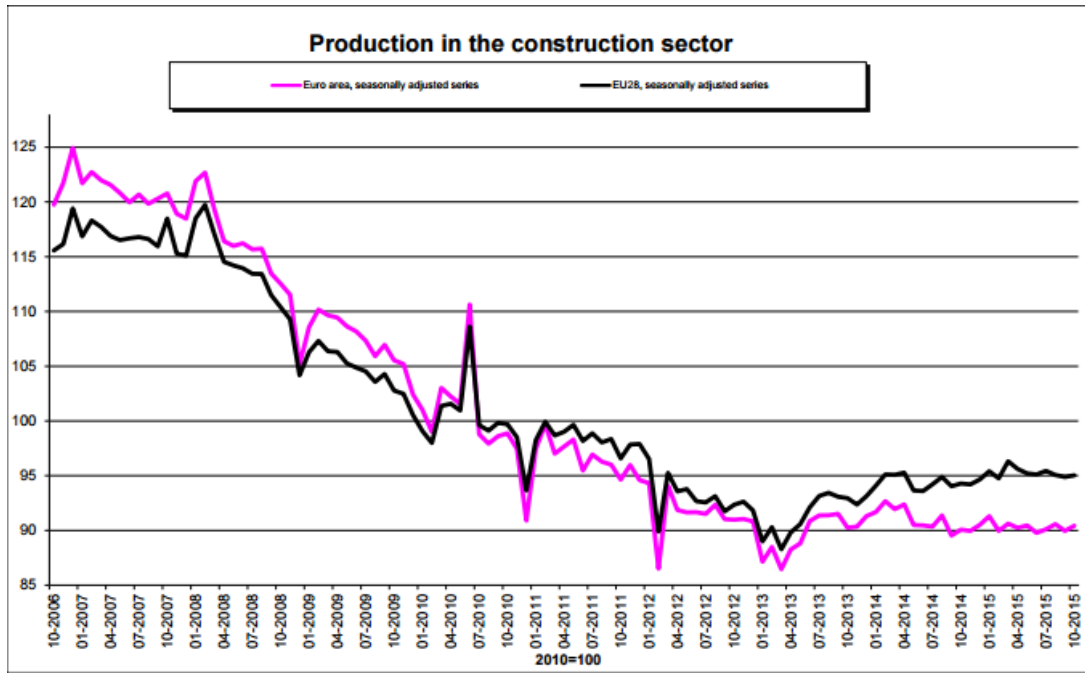
Photo © Bart Heijns



Photo © Bart Heijns

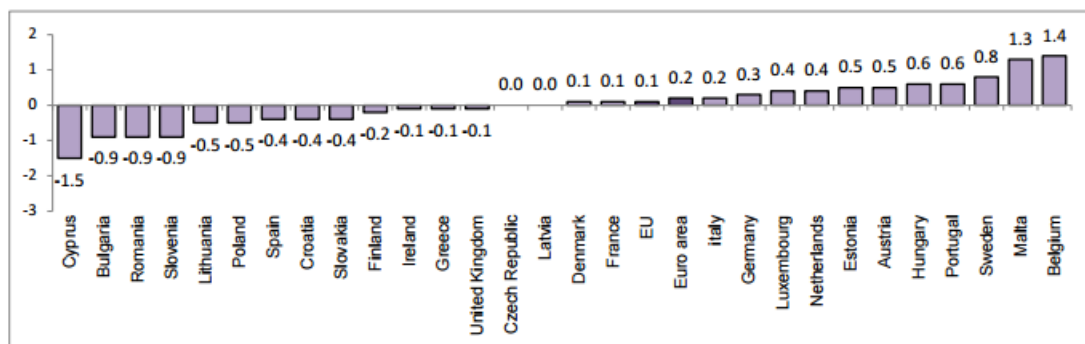


News in brief



Graph 1- Production in Construction (pink - Euro Area, Black - EU28)

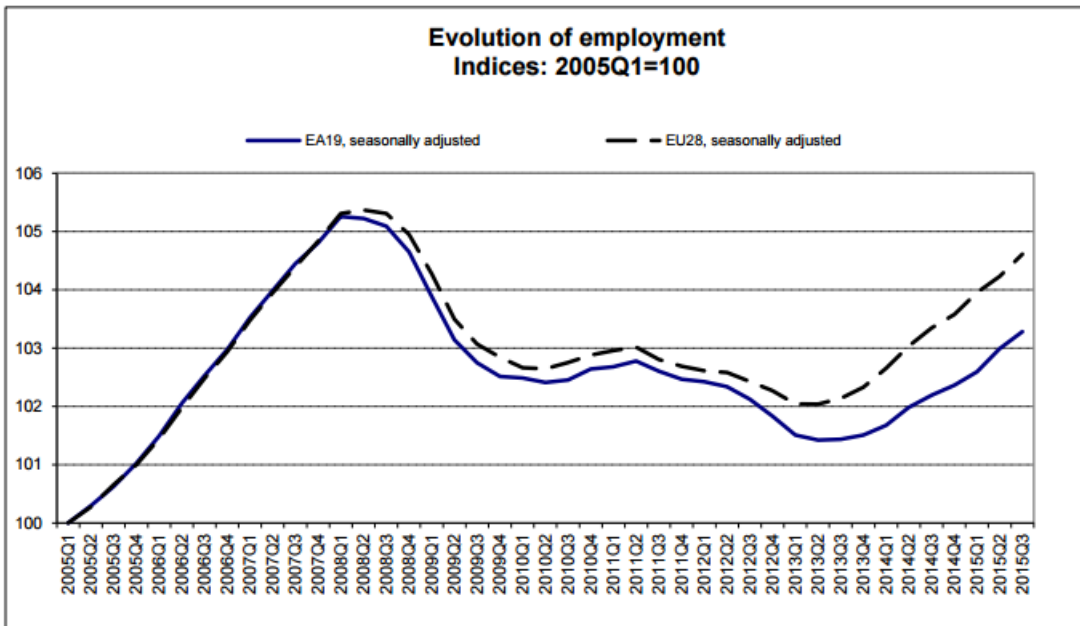
According to first estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, in October 2015 compared with September 2015, the seasonally adjusted production in the construction sector increased by 0.5 % in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.1% in EU28.



Graph 2 - Annual inflation rates (%) in November 2015, in ascending order

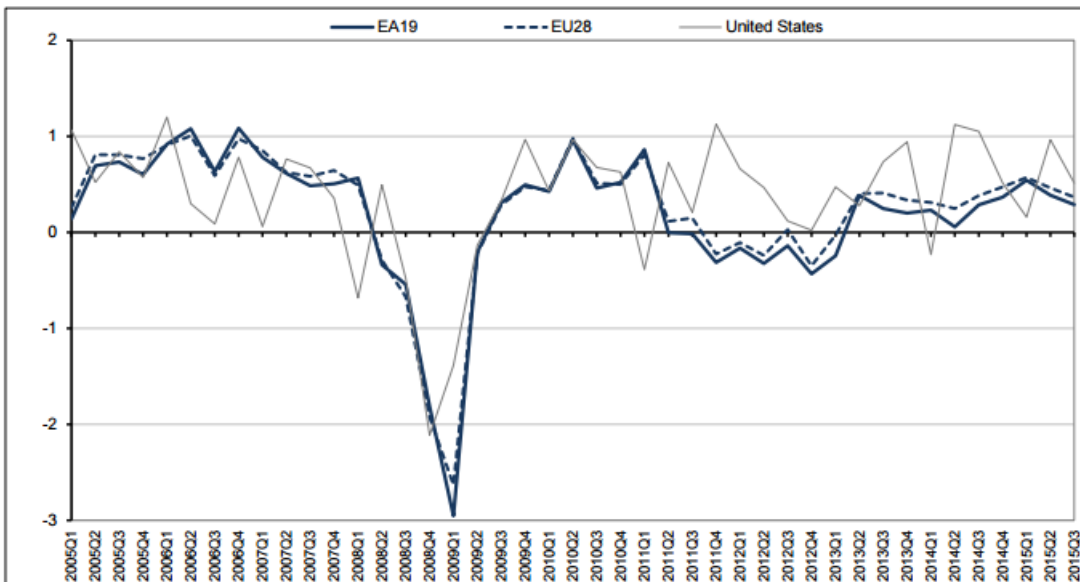
Annual inflation was 0.2% in November 2015 in the Euro area and 0.1% in EU 28.

*Data for UK are for October 2015.



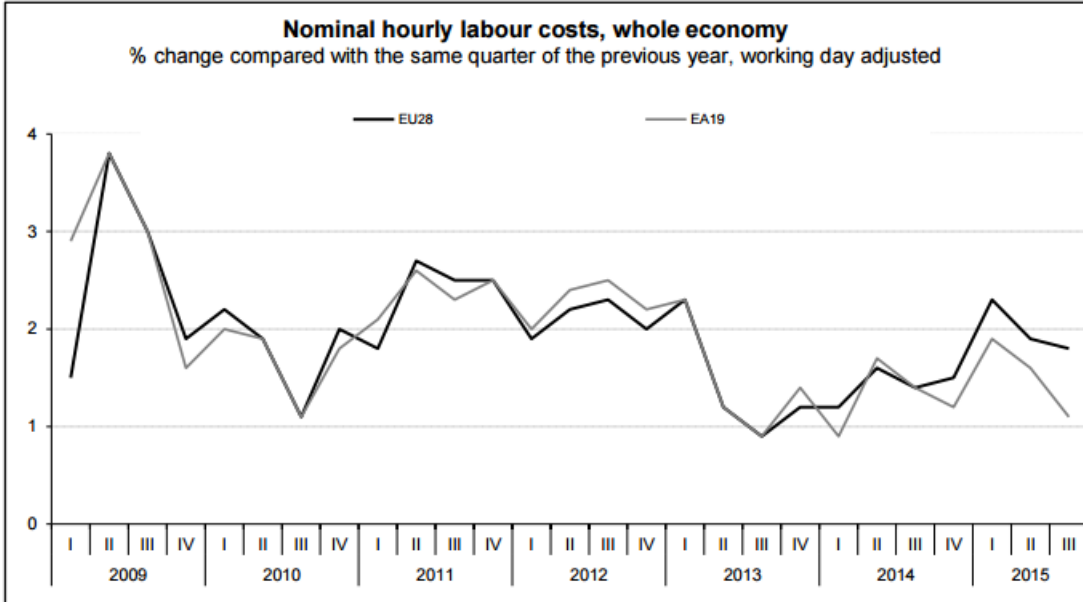
Graph 3 - Employment rate - % change over the previous quarter

The number of persons employed increased by 0.3% in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.4% in the EU28 in the third quarter of 2015 compared with the previous quarter, according to a second estimate published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union.



Graph 4 - GDP growth rate - % change over the previous quarter in Euro area, EU & US

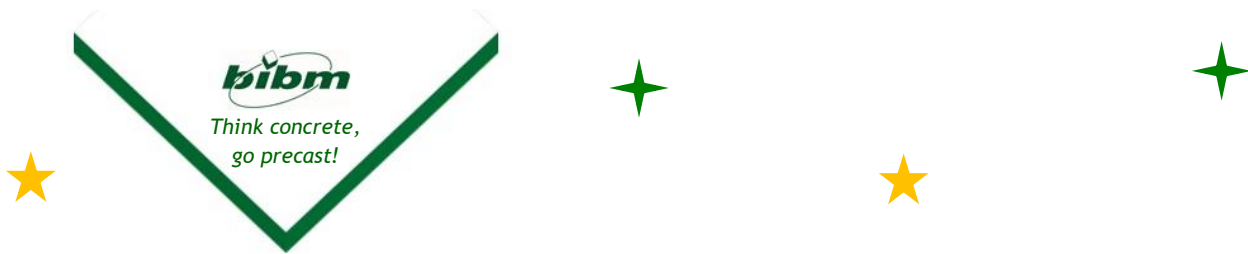
Seasonally adjusted GDP rose by 0.3% in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.4% in the EU28 during the third quarter of 2015, compared with the previous quarter, according to a second estimate published by Eurostat. In the second quarter of 2015, GDP grew by 0.4% and 0.5% respectively.



Graph 5 - Nominal hourly labour costs (whole economy) (bold-EU28, non-bold -EA19)

% change compared with the same quarter of the previous year, working day adjusted

Hourly labour costs rose by 1.1% in the euro area (EA19) and by 1.8% in the EU28 in the third quarter of 2015, compared with the same quarter of the previous year.



Agenda

JANUARY

12 January 2016
**CEMBUREAU NEPSI coordinators meeting
 (open for BIBM members)**
 Brussels, Belgium

15 January 2016
CPE TG CPR implementation
 Conference call

19 January 2016
BIBM Board meeting
 Brussels, Belgium

21 January 2016
ECP TF Sustainable Concrete
 Conference call

28 January 2016
European Masonry Alliance
 Conference call

FEBRUARY

9 February 2016
CPE TG CPR implementation
 Brussels, Belgium

10 February 2016
Standing Committee for Construction
 Brussels, Belgium

11 February 2016
ECP Board
 Brussels, Belgium

22 February 2016
Directors' meeting
 Ulm, Germany

MARCH

2 March 2016
BIBM Technical Commission
 Brussels, Belgium

9 March 2016
BIBM Technical Commission
 Brussels, Belgium

15 March 2016
CPE Sustainability WG
 Brussels, Belgium

16 March 2016
CPE CPR WG
 Brussels, Belgium

22 March 2016
CPE Event Parliament
 Brussels, Belgium

To the Newsletter of Construction Products Europe (former CEPMC), please follow [this link](#).

To read the Newsletter of CEMBUREAU, please follow [this link](#). You can also subscribe directly following this link <http://www.cembureau.eu/newsletter/subscriptions>.

To read the Quarterly Newsletter of The Concrete Initiative, please follow [this link](#).



List of Acronyms:

AhG - Ad-hoc Group

CPE - Construction Product Europe

CPR - Construction Products Regulation

C&D waste - construction and demolition waste

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

ECP - European Concrete Platform

EMA - European Masonry Alliance

JRC - Joint Research Centre of the European Commission

PCR - Product Category Rules

TF - Task Force