



Construction sector

- ❖ On 24 November, **Fire Safe Europe** launched a **campaign** to call the European Commission to act on Fire Safety. Currently there is no coordinated approach to fire prevention and response across Member States, and fire safety is not yet part of the EU policy-making.

Therefore an alliance of fire-fighters, researchers, fire engineers, associations and industry representatives signed the [call to action](#) and ask the European Commission to address this urging and important issue. While there is no harmonized European Fire Safety Policy, European citizens do not have the same chances of survival when a building catches fire. To illustrate this case, Fire Safe Europe prepared a [video](#) with two teams to participate in an escape game while simulating a fire with an uneven level of fire safety.

- ❖ DG GROW (Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs) is developing a “**building passport**” proposal for the end of 2017. The Commission is currently gathering information whether to go ahead and develop the project or not. A building passport would mean to list every single construction product in the building.

The first meeting was held at the end of September 2016 when they discussed the scope and function of a building passport, data transparency and reliability, and existing national initiatives.

The European Commission aims to have a step-by-step approach with:

1. component to a system level data;
2. performance measurements;
3. property valuation.

The second meeting will take place early 2017 and Construction Products Europe is engaging with the developers of the project and other stakeholders of the construction sector.

- ❖ On 17 November, the **Concrete Initiative** held its annual Concrete Dialogue event with more than 100 participants. The event was a great success with good roundtable discussions and with a dynamic interactive feedback session. Pictures, presentations and reports can be found [here](#).
- ❖ On 10 November, the **European Policy Centre** held an event entitled on *Energy Union and construction: could energy efficient buildings be an untapped source of prosperity in Europe?* Elżbieta Bieńkowska, European Commissioner for Single Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs gave a speech about “Energy Union and Construction: the opportunity we must seize”. Her speech can be found [here](#).



In her speech she added that the Commission assessed the implementation of the Construction Products Regulation and there is way for improvement (especially on harmonised standards and market surveillance), therefore it foresees the possible revision of CPR in the course of 2018.

- ❖ On 9 December, the European Concrete Platform (ECP) officially joined Fire Safe Europe as full member. As representative of the concrete industry, the ECP identified fire safety as one of its top priorities due to the inherent characteristic of our material and of its durability. While fire safety is a priority for the ECP, it recognizes that the debate is wider than the concrete industry alone and that it affects policies at both national and European level. Being in the Board of Fire Safe Europe will allow the concrete sector to further promote the importance for saving human lives thanks to a resilient and incombustible building fabrics (envelope).





Live from the European Union

European Commission's Work Programme 2017

The European Commission issued its [Work Programme for 2017](#) with the title “Delivering a Europe that protects, empowers and defends”. The programme [has 21 key initiatives to implement 10 political priorities](#).

1. New boost for jobs, growth and investment
2. Connected digital single market
3. A Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy
4. A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base
5. A Deeper and Fairer economic and monetary union
6. Trade: A reasonable and Balanced Free Trade agreement with the U.S.
7. An Area of Justice and Fundamental Rights Based on Mutual Trust
8. Towards a new policy on migration
9. A Stronger Global Actor
10. A Union of Democratic Change

Amongst these priorities there are several initiatives that are directly relevant for the construction sector and some priorities are hiding a lot of opportunities as well.

The third big priority about the *Energy Union and climate change policy* is directly relevant for our sector. The European Commission issued the “Clean Energy for all Europeans” package on 30 November with important legislations including amongst others, the long-awaited revision of the Energy Performance of Building Directive, the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive.

The initiative closely linked to this priority is the “*Implementation of the Energy Union Strategy: low emission travel and mobility*” which will have further impact for the construction sector and as well as urban planning.

Another relevant initiative, linked to growth and jobs, is the “*Implementation of the Action Plan on Circular Economy*”. [This will include:](#)

- ❖ A non-legislative strategy on plastics use, reuse and recycling to be presented in the last quarter of 2017;
- ❖ A proposal for a Regulation on minimum quality requirements for reused water;
- ❖ REFIT¹ revision of the Drinking Water Directive

The third relevant initiative is the “*Modernisation of the [Comitology procedure](#)*” (linked to the priority Union of Democratic Change). EC will assess the legitimacy of existing

¹ Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) aims at making sure that EU laws deliver their intended benefits for citizens, businesses and society while removing red tape and lowering costs. It also aims to make EU laws simpler and easier to understand.



procedures for the adoption of delegated and implementing acts during the first quarter of next year (relevant for the future revision of Construction Products Regulation).

European Commission issues integrated “Energy Package”

On 30 November the European Commission issued the long-awaited and much anticipated Energy package (“Clean Energy for All Europeans”) which contains important initiatives, including proposed revisions of the Directives on Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD), Energy Efficiency (EED) and Renewable Energy, and a European Buildings Initiative (smart financing for smart buildings).

The Commission aims to achieve goals on cutting emissions and adapt Europe’s grid to a rise of digital technologies and growth of wind and solar power that is transforming industry and challenging utilities. Additionally, the package also aims at reducing energy prices and modernizes billing.

The European Commission proposes a binding 2030 energy efficiency target of 30% and an extension of the EED’s main provisions, Article 7, until 2050.

Furthermore, the reference to thermal capacity is maintained in the new proposal of the EPBD. Besides, there are new provisions for “smart readiness” including demand response (interaction with the grid) and energy storage and flexibility. The Concrete Initiative welcomes the “smart indicator” and the recently published [3 study](#) confirms that heavyweight buildings can provide this flexibility. By storing thermal energy, the consumer’s energy demand can be shifted in time, which results in up to a 25% CO2 reduction per dwelling, up to 50% reduction in the need for peak electricity supply capacity and savings of up to €300 per household per year.

[European Commission - Press Release](#)

[The Concrete Initiative - Energy efficient and low CO2 buildings](#)

[The Concrete Initiative - Thermal mass fact sheet](#)



National Award Winner Project

Wehrhahn-Line Subway (Dusseldorf, Germany)

(This case study can be found in original version on the website of The Concrete Initiative <http://www.theconcreteinitiative.eu/case-studies/216-wehrhahn-line-subway>)

The Wehrhahn-Line an exceptional group achievement that opened in Düsseldorf in February 2016, as a new subway line (3.4 km) across Düsseldorf city centre. In Düsseldorf, this is the biggest transport construction scheme since the completion of the Rhine River tunnel in 1993. The project was completed after 15 years of planning and construction, with architects, artists, engineers, and the city administration working side-by-side.

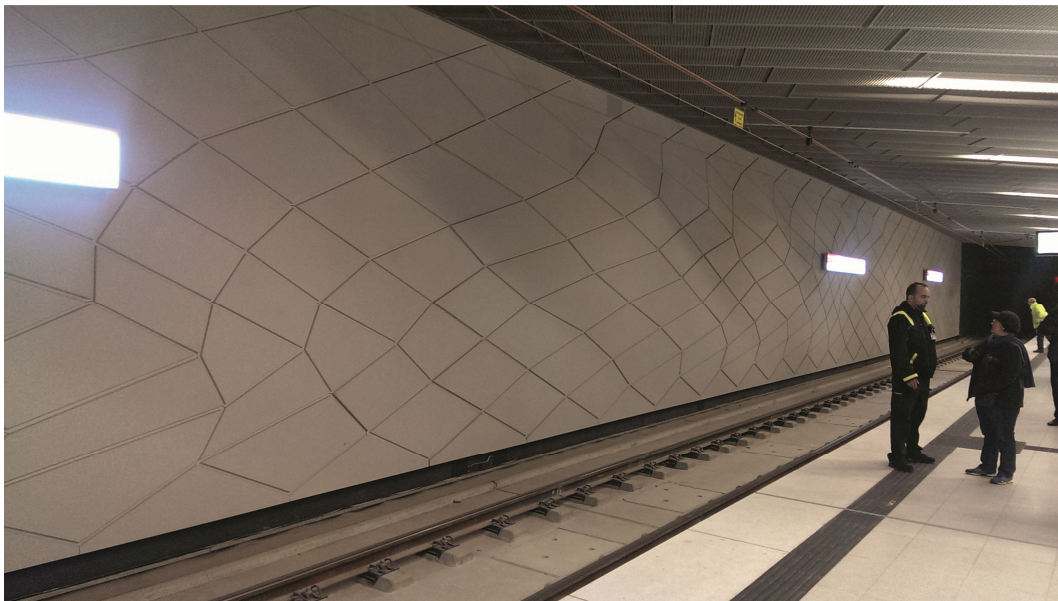


The project was launched with an international competition in 2001. From 70 entries, Darmstadt-based architect and artist Heike Klussmann were selected to design the project. In the award-winning design, architecture and art are inseparable, complementing one another as they extend as an ensemble from the surface down to the train platforms. The design is like a snake winding its way through the soil and widening out at the stations. In the transition from surface to underground, identifiable “cut spaces” were created on the wall, each of them distinguishable with a unique identity (2700 different formats).



The skilful interplay of engineering expertise and art has succeeded in making the Wehrhahn-Line an exemplary and innovative contribution to the city infrastructure, one that now offers Düsseldorf's residents and visitors an exceptional opportunity to "experience space" in local urban transit.

The art concept is based on an outstanding construction of precast elements in high-performance concrete cast stone, with individually computer integrated manufacturing.



Key Facts:



Country: Germany

Project: Kontinuum Wehrhahn-Linie Düsseldorf

Year of completion: 2016

Floor area: 4000 m²

Architectural design: netzwerkarchitekten GmbH, Prof. Heike Klussmann & Universität Kassel

Contractor: Federal Capital of Nordrhein-Westfalen Düsseldorf

Cast stone (as wall cladding): Schwab-Stein GmbH Betonsteinwerk

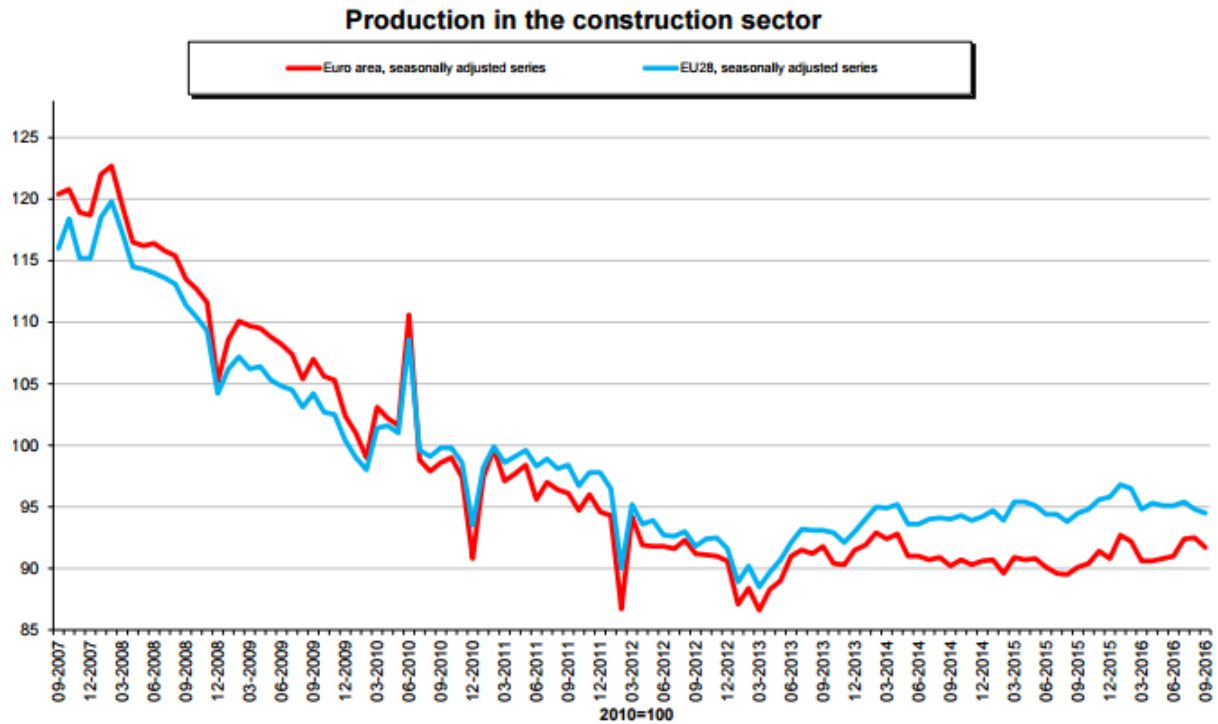
Aggregates: "Nordisch Weiß" and crystalline silica

High-performance-binder: Flowstone white by Dyckerhoff

Pigmentes: synthetic iron-oxide

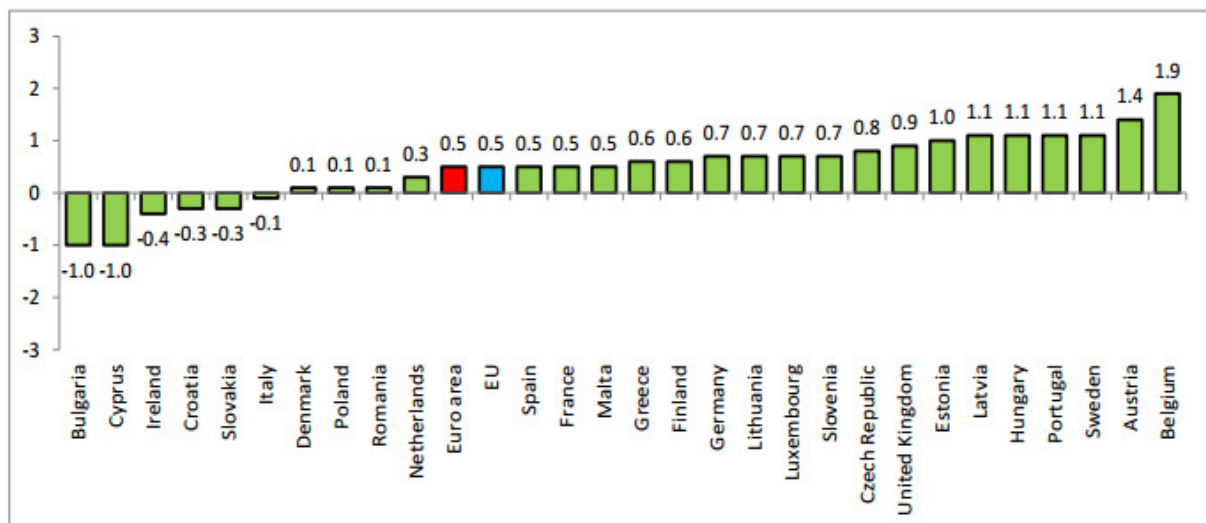


News in brief



Graph 1- Production in Construction (red - Euro Area, blue - EU28)

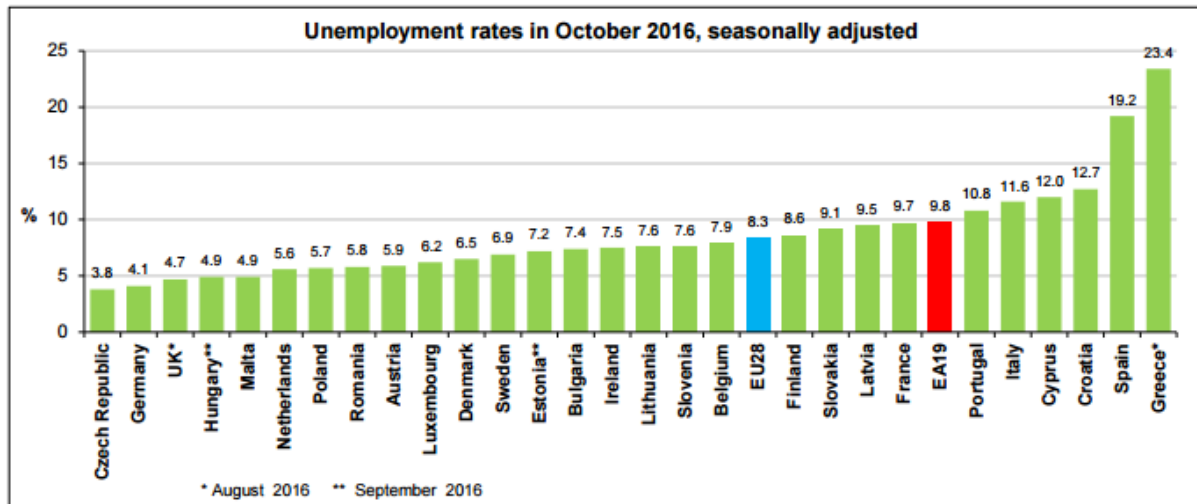
According to first estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, in September 2016 compared with August 2016, the seasonally adjusted production in the construction sector decreased by 0.9% in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.3% in the EU28.



Graph 2 - Annual inflation rates (%) in October 2016, in ascending order

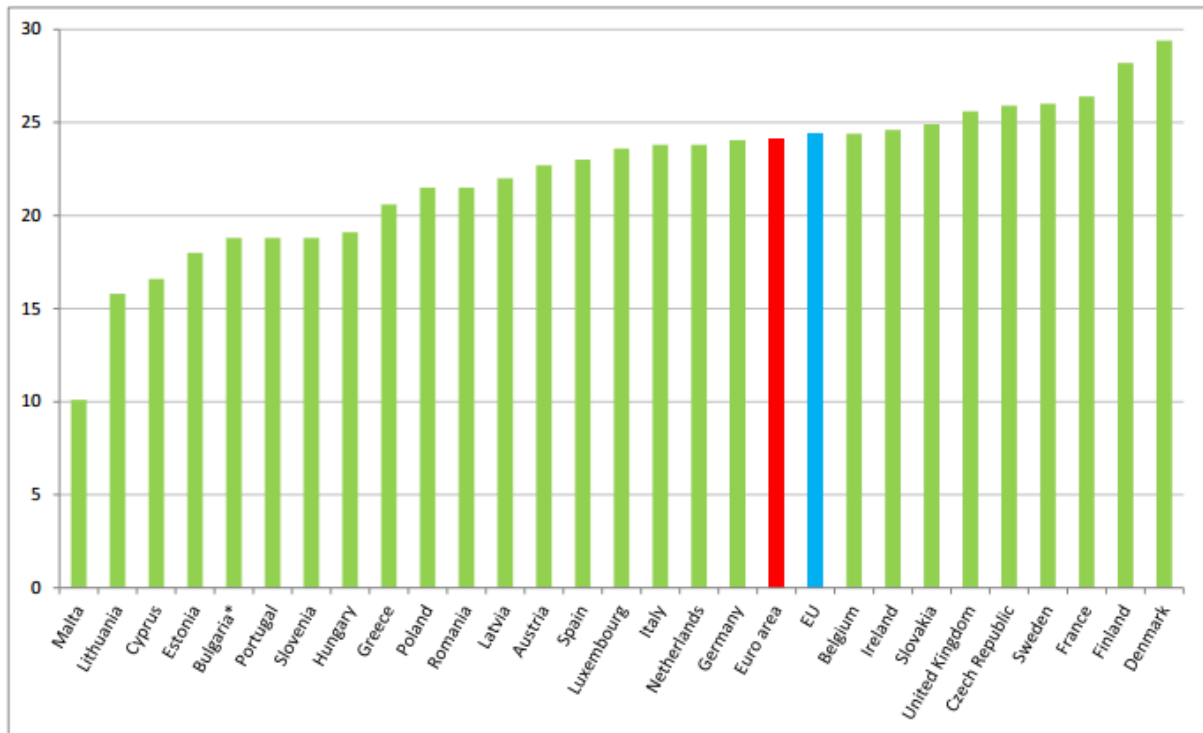


Both Euro area and EU 28 annual inflation was 0.5% in October 2016, up from 0.4% in September. The lowest annual rates were registered in Bulgaria and Cyprus (-1.0%) while the highest annual rates were recorded in Belgium (1.9%), and Austria (1.4%).



[Graph 3 - Unemployment rate](#)

The euro area (EA19) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 9.8% in October 2016, while 8.3% in EU28. Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates were recorded in the Czech Republic (3.8%) and Germany (4.1%). The highest unemployment rates were observed in Greece (23.4% in August 2016) and Spain (19.2%).



* 2014 data instead of 2015
Croatia: data not available

Graph 4 - [Share of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels in total household expenditure in the EU Member States, 2015 \(%\)](#)

In 2015, households in the European Union (EU) devoted nearly a quarter of their total consumption expenditure to "housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels". This is also the expenditure item whose share increased the most significantly over the last decade, from 22.5% of total household expenditure in 2005 to 24.4% in 2015 (or +1.9 percentage points).

In particular, the most remarkable increases over this 10- year time period were recorded in Spain, Ireland and Portugal. In contrast, the share of "housing water, electricity, gas and other fuels" in total household expenditure slightly dropped between 2005 and 2015 in Slovakia, Sweden, and Malta.



Agenda

JANUARY 2017

18 January 2017

EU Technical Platform on simplified labels

Brussels, Belgium

18 January 2017

AhG Concrete Initiative

Brussels, Belgium

30 January 2017

ECP TF Sustainable Concrete

Web-meeting

31 January 2017

IMCO hearing on CPR

European Parliament, Belgium

31 January 2017

EMA Dinner with MEPs

Brussels, Belgium

FEBRUARY 2017

1 February 2017

CEN/TC 104/TG 20

Brussels, Belgium

2-3 February 2017

ECO-Binder General Assembly

BRE Watford, UK

10 February 2017

CPE - TG Implementation of CPR

Confcall

13 February 2017

Directors meeting

Neu-Ulm, Germany

MARCH 2017

8 March 2017

BIBM Technical Commission

Brussels, Belgium

13-14 March 2017

VEEP Board

Genoa, Italy

15 March 2017

ECP Board

Brussels, Belgium

22 March 2017

BIBM Environment Commission

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:

CPE - Construction Product Europe

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



ECP - European Concrete Platform

EMA - European Masonry Alliance

IPHA - International Pre-stressed Hollowcore Association

TF - Task Force