



Roundtable organized by Casa Sociala a Constructorilor - CSC, with the support of the European Association of Paritarian Institutions - AEIP, with the topic:

Good practices in Continuing Vocational Training and other services offered by paritarian organizations in the Construction Sector

Casa Sociala a Constructorilor - CSC, together with the representative social partners of the Romanian construction sector – FPSC and FGS Familia – with the support of the European Association of Paritarian Institutions (AEIP), organized a roundtable in Bucharest, which brought together both European social partners, such as FIEC and EFBWW, as well as representatives of paritarian organizations from Italy, Belgium and Spain.

Guests from the social partners from Bulgaria and the Republic of Moldova also participated, along with representatives of other institutions involved in the industry. The debates focused on three essential directions for the development of the sector: continuous vocational training, adaptation to the digital and green transition, as well as the implementation of good practices to increase the attractiveness of the construction sector.

The event provided a valuable framework for the exchange of ideas and experiences, helping to strengthen a common vision for the future of construction in Europe.

- **Cristian Stefanescu, General Manager of CSC** – initiated the working session and underlined the importance of exchanging ideas and good practices, stressing that the law now allows the Social House of Builders to organize continuous vocational training courses.
- **Simone Miotto, Executive Director of AEIP** - highlighted the role of AEIP and congratulated the Romanian side for the existence of the Social House of Builders, a unique model in Eastern Europe, which can inspire other countries in the region. "The Social House of Builders in Romania is a remarkable example of a paritarian institution, being the only one of its kind in Eastern Europe. We have great confidence in its role and the potential model it can offer to other countries in the region."
- **Cătălin Gheran, Member of the Cabinet of the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission** - presented the strategic directions of the European Commission for the construction sector, highlighting the challenges related to the



green transition, digitalization and energy sustainability. Among the relevant European programmes mentioned:

- ✓ **Horizon Europe** – the largest research and innovation programme (€95 billion)
- ✓ **Transition Pathway for Construction** – supports the transition to a sustainable and digitalised sector
- ✓ **Pact for Skills** – training 750,000 people
- ✓ **Pact for Youth 2.0 and YES/YES2** – support for young people and SMEs
- ✓ **Construction Blueprint** – modernizing and digitalizing the sector through Erasmus+
- ✓ **Union of Skills** – harmonisation of skills in the EU
- ✓ **Competitiveness Compass** – monitoring and improving economic competitiveness

These programs are supported by European funds, including **PNRR, Social Climate Fund, Erasmus+, ESF+**.

At the same time, he referred to the communication that was to be made by the European Commission, related to the Union of Skills, with the 4 pillars:

1. Skills development;
2. Continuing vocational training;
3. Movement and interoperability of skills;
4. Attracting and retaining talent, including from outside the EU.

He also confirmed the implementation, starting with the second quarter of 2025, of the **Individual Learning Accounts pilot project**, carried out by the Ministry of Labor in partnership with the CSC.

- **Cristian Erbașu, president of CSC's Board of Administration, as well as of the FPSC** – addressed the major problem of the construction sector in the last 20 years, the fact that the importance of vocational training was not realized in time. Instead, the proposed solution is urgent investment in everything that means qualification for students and workers, reform (including the training of an important segment of teachers and educators) and investments in innovation and new technologies.
- **Gheorghe Bălăceanu, vice-president of CSC's Board of Administration and president of FGS Familia** – underlined the importance of social dialogue and collaboration for VET, as an essential element for the well-being of workers.



- **Ramona Veleanu - member of CSC's Board of Administration and Giuseppe Perretti - AEIP - Policy Advisor**, moderated the debate, offering both models for teaching skills and challenges that need to be solved.

Also, the event organized by the Social House of Builders in Bucharest brought together experts from European paritarian institutions: Constructiv (Belgium), Formedil and CNCE (Italy) and Fundación Laboral de la Construcción (Spain), but also representatives of the Bulgarian Chamber of Constructions, as well as of the social partners from the Republic of Moldova.

They presented successful models in continuing vocational training and other services for construction workers:

- ◆ **Constructiv (Belgium)** - An organization with a tradition in vocational training (since 1965), it trains more than 5000 workers annually.

Strategies to increase the attractiveness of continuing vocational training for companies:

- **Financial compensation** – companies receive **€25/hour** for each employee who participates in the courses;
- **Training at the companies' headquarters** if distance is an impediment;
- **Organizing courses during the winter, in the evening, on weekends, etc.;**
- **Providing administrative support to SMEs** in managing employees' participation in training;
- **Support for companies in identifying training needs;**
- **Accreditation and training of trainers** within companies;
- **Partnerships for the development of educational programs** adapted to market requirements;
- **Developing competency profiles** that are approved by the social partners and must be taken into account by training providers when designing training programs;
- **Mandatory contributions to training funds**, regulated by collective agreements.

- ◆ **CNCE and Formedil (Italy)** – Specialized financial institutions offering social benefits and vocational training in construction.

Initiatives to attract and retain the construction workforce:



- **Scholarships for the children of workers** (merit and social criteria);
- **Camps and educational activities** to promote the construction field;
- **Medical services and financial support** in case of accidents, illnesses, unemployment;
- **Analysis of emerging profiles** in construction, to guide the social partners
- **Skills competitions** (e.g.: "Ediltrophy", organized for 20 years);
- **Investments in modern teaching technologies** (BIM, simulators, drones);
- **Promoting the sector in educational institutions** and providing recognised qualifications.

◆ **Fundación Laboral de la Construcción (Spain)** - It owns **more than 50 training centers**, has developed more than 140 manuals and implements programs nationwide.

Key programs and innovations:

- **Mandatory health and safety courses;**
- **100,000+ annually trained people in 2023 and 2024;**
- **Annual funding of € 80 million** (half of which comes from the companies' contributions);
- **Modern technologies:** robotics, 3D printing, BIM, drones;
- **Over 70 European projects**, including **Construction Blueprint, Green Growth, Safe Skills;**
- **Micro-qualifications** for flexible specializations;
- **Job portal** integrated with courses and AI counseling/guidance.

◆ **The Bulgarian Chamber of Constructions** – mentioned the training schemes offered by employers' and trade unions' organizations in the sector, but also successful collaborations with schools, universities and vocational education units, in order to offer initiation, improvement, retraining, adaptation to technologies, etc.

◆ **The social partners of the Republic of Moldova** expressed:



- their desire to set up a joint institution in the construction sector, which would allow them to implement, even in a small part, the good practices presented at the event organized by the CSC;
- the need to identify a way to recognize the skills acquired by workers on the construction site, at the workplace.

FIEC and EFBWW

The European social partners, whose representatives opened the last panel of the round table, presented initiatives aimed at making the construction sector more attractive for workers, young people, etc.: Pact for Skills, image promotion campaigns organised in collaboration with other sectors, usually technical, the in-house study organised by EFBWW on the shortage of labour in construction and ways to manage it, the EFBWW campaign to reduce subcontracting chains, etc.

Conclusion

The European models presented demonstrate the success of policies that combine modern vocational training, social support and technological innovation. The Social House of Builders aims to implement the best practices in the Romanian construction sector, contributing to the professionalization of the workforce and increasing the competitiveness of the industry.