

NEWS

EVENTS DIARY

2016

World of Concrete (Europe)

September 6-7, 2016
Paris, France
www.worldofconcreteeurope.com

Europlatform 2016

September 22, 2016
Vienna, Austria
www.europlatform.info

IMDER's 2nd International Construction

Equipment Congress
October 20-21, 2016
Istanbul, Turkey
www.vizyon2023turkiye.org/eng

2017

World of Concrete

January 17-20, 2017
Las Vegas, US
www.worldofconcrete.com

Samoter

February 22-25, 2017
Verona, Italy
www.samoter.it

Conexpo

March 7-11, 2017
Las Vegas, US
www.conexpoconagg.com

Smopyc

April 4-7, 2017
Zaragoza, Spain
www.feriazaragoza.es/smopyc.aspx

Concerns over UK vote to leave European Union

A falling pound and price rises already look like affecting business as projects are already being put on hold

The UK's referendum vote to leave the European Union has caused concern through much of the country's construction industry, with the Pound Sterling slipping, stocks falling and building materials suppliers raising their prices.

The UK Construction Equipment Association (CEA) said its members would have been "surprised and disappointed" by the result.

Rob Oliver, CEA chief executive, said, "All CEA members will now have to contend with a further period of uncertainty which will be bad for business."

"International companies will have to make some key strategic decisions on future investment in the UK and our exporter members will have to contend with exchange rate volatility which is already impacting on the CEA's overseas trade promotion programme."

He said, "Our partners within CECE (the Committee of European Construction Equipment) I know are deeply

disappointed by the turn of events but the CEA remains committed to continue to work with CECE as future access to the EU market remains pivotal."

Monika Slowikowska, founder of Golden Houses Developments, said, "The day after Brexit (the decision to leave the EU), seven of our building materials suppliers told us they'd be raising their prices in July – the hikes ranging from 3 to 8% per cent."

"Then, on the following Monday, while checking the stability of our clients' funding, we learned that one of our projects is being put on hold."

However, Lord Bamford, chairman of UK-based JCB, said that there was little to fear from leaving the EU.

He said, "The business community now needs to look to the future. The UK is the world's fifth largest trading nation. We therefore have little to fear from leaving the EU. European markets are important to many UK businesses, including JCB, and this will not change." **ce**

FIEC predicts recovery in EU construction

A 2.4% recovery in activity in the overall EU construction industry in 2015 is being reported by FIEC (the European Construction Industry Federation), while it is forecasting another increase for 2016 – but only at 2.1%.

Vice president Jean-Louis Marchand, who is responsible for economic issues at FIEC and is now the new president of the association, said, "After reaching the bottom in 2013, activity is slowly recovering in the construction industry."

"In 2015, the increase in activity has finally been slightly higher than we

had initially forecast and the trend is expected to continue in 2016, but at a slower pace."

He added, "There are economic and political uncertainties, such as, for example, the referendum in the UK, the asylum-seekers issue and the geo-political situation in the Middle East, that are hindering investments – and there cannot be growth without investment."

Marchand said that overall, EU total construction output amounted to €1.24 trillion in 2015 – an increase of 2.4% compared to 2014. He said, "This is positive,

but we will still need time to catch up with the pre-crisis levels."

According to FIEC's statistics, behind the overall figure for the EU, disparities between Member States remain significant, with Sweden's figure of a rise of 10%, leading, and Greece falling 15.1% at the bottom.

FIEC said that the increase in activity in 2015 was mainly down to two sectors – civil engineering which was up 6.2%, and new

housebuilding up 3.5%. The non-residential sector remained weak at -0.5%, both private at +0.3% and, in particular, public which fell 2.4%.

Rehabilitation and maintenance activity maintained relatively stable development before and throughout the crisis at 2.6% in 2015, which FIEC said had an important cushioning effect for the entire construction sector.

It added that this trend was expected to continue in the near future. **ce**

First 3D builder in action

What is claimed to be the world's first 3D builder – a 3D printer – was put into service in June at FabCity, a temporary sustainable campus at the end of Java Island in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, by Dutch contractor Bam and Universe Architecture.

It constructed a Landscape House, a structure based on a Möbius strip, part of a project which is a collaboration between the two companies.

Bam said the building machine was the first of its kind where free-form print technology was linked to automotive industry robotics. It described it as a ground-breaking innovation that made free-form architecture possible, as well as the creation of complex ornamental exteriors.

The 3D Builder started with the construction of the Landscape House on a scale of 1:4 at FabCity, followed by a full-sized house in 2017.

