

Standing Committee Development & Business Environment

Chairman: **Karlheinz ZACHMANN**

Vice-Chairman: Aris CHATZIDAKIS

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Introduction

- The main issues of activities since our last General Assembly in Riga:

EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION FORUM (ECF)

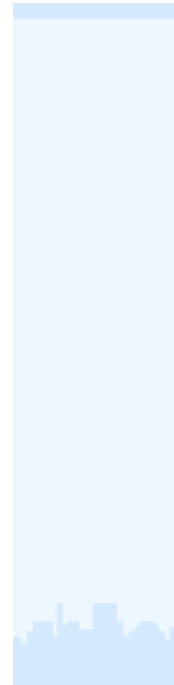
It is recalled that ECF is an informal gathering of 10 professional associations / federations directly linked with the construction sector. ECCE is one of the ECF members.

- ECF normally meets intends to meet 4 times a year.
- Unfortunately, due to multiple constraints, especially by Architect's Council(ACE) being the hosting member, no gathering took place in 2008 insofar. The date of 12/12 has once been earmarked. Some members advocate for a gathering in October 2008.

EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION FORUM

Suggested Items to be put on the Agenda:

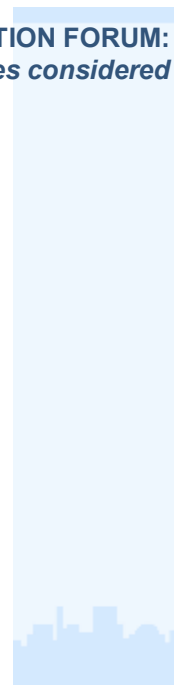
- Progress on Construction Products Regulation
- Housing and urban/territorial policy
- Sustainable Production and Consumption Action Plan (ECO design, ECO labelling, Energy efficiency)
- Next EP and EC in 2009 -expectations
- Lobbyist registration
- Small Business Act (SBA)



EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION FORUM: *Main items and issues considered*

Internal Market Package

- **The "new" New Approach has been adopted by EP and Council**
- **The implications on the coming initiatives of the Commission, especially related to Consumer Protection and Consumer Goods, are to be seen.**



Liability and Insurance

- The Commission study, especially focused on SMEs in the construction sector and aiming at benchmarking a number of existing national warranty and insurance systems, is still under way.
- EFCA intended a small own study with respect to consulting engineers. It seems that negotiations with the consultant failed completely.



SMALL BUSINESS ACT

- **The Commission initiated a public internet consultation on January 31, 2008.**
- **The initiative has been presented in the form of a Communication to European Parliament and Council as well as to ECOSOC and CoR under the title "Think Small First".**



SMALL BUSINESS ACT - *continued*

- **The SBA consists of a set of 10 principles to guide the conception and implementation of policies, both at EU and Memberstates level, such as:**
 - create the right environment that honest bankruptcy gets a second chance
 - adapt design rules (standardisation)
 - create responsive public administrations
 - facilitate SMEs participation in public procurement
 - facilitate access to finance
 - create more opportunities for SMEs within the Single Market
 - promote innovation by SMEs
 - make SMEs benefit of environmental challanges
 - let SMEs benefit from the growth of the markets

- **As a first concrete initiative of EC the following proposals are prepared:**
 - modernise and simplify VAT
 - amend Directive 2000/35/EC on late payment

BUSINESS PLAN 2009

- **Develop and intensify links with the European Construction Forum (ECF), and, especially, with ACE and EFCA**
- **Tighten links with ECEC**
- **Participate, as actively as possible, within ECF and especially with respect to energy saving and urban development**
- **Participate, representing ECCE, in relevant European Commission and European Parliament events and report to ECCE Members**
- **Be informed on relevant EC initiatives under the Small Business Act (SBA)**
- **Try to get information and be informed, after EP elections and EC appointment in 2009, about persons (MEP, EC) linked to civil engineering and construction**

WHAT NEXT ?

- **Look for relevant information and report**
- **Follow the negotiations on CPR**
- **Keep vigilant on SBA initiatives**
- **Get informed on Lobbyists registration**
- **Host and organise an ECF gathering in Brussels**