

Analysis and Documentation of the Construction Sector in Greece and Cyprus

Construction sector constitutes the Europe's largest industrial employer accounting for about 10% of the EU GDP. According to official statistical data, the construction sector is composed of 2.3 million companies with a total workforce of 11,8 million operatives, representing the 7% of the total employment in EU.

Accordingly to the progress marked in EU, construction comprises one of the most significant and rapidly developing sectors in Greece and Cyprus, since it is directly related to the economic development of these countries. In Greece, construction accounts for about 9-10% of the national GDP, while in Cyprus the percentage is near 7,5%.

Construction activity can be analysed in two categories: public and private works. Public works are represented by big infrastructure projects, such as roads and airports. In Greece, the public construction sector marked a noteworthy development during the previous years, mainly due to the preparation for 2004 Olympic Games. Some of the most significant public projects were Attiko Metro, the airport of El. Venizelos, Attiki Odos motorway, the motorway Patras-Athens etc. Public construction in Cyprus noted during the last years an increase that overcame the percentage of 32%.

In the framework of the project, the collection and analysis of the national data from Greece and Cyprus have been completed. Construction and demolition activities, types and number of building permits, data for manufacturing materials, geographic distribution in urban and rural regions and type and budget of public works were determined and a report reviewing the activities of the construction sector in both countries has been conducted.

Some of the conclusions risen from the analysis of the construction sector in Greece and Cyprus are the following:

- Regarding the construction permits, significant increase is recorded during the last few years, which overcomes the percentage of 18% in Greece and 23% in Cyprus. The volume of the annual construction activity ranges in around 75 million m³ in Greece, while in Cyprus it doesn't overcome the threshold of 9 million m³.
- In Greece, significant increase is recorded in the construction of new industrial buildings, while noteworthy is the decrease noted during the last years in the construction of educational and commercial buildings. In Cyprus, the most significant increase is marked in the construction of industrial buildings and storage areas.
- As far as for the construction cost, the increase recorded in the last years appears to come from the increase in the materials cost for Greece, while for Cyprus it is owed mostly to the labour cost.
- The main construction material used in Greece is concrete, followed by bricks. However, in some rural prefectures stone is still the main construction material for buildings.