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Potential of Latvian Construction Industry



Construction industry is one of the most important industries in Latvian national economy both according to the financial turnover and the number of employees. Data of Central Statistical Bureau show that the share of construction in the structure of GDP in Latvia has rapidly increased since 2005 (by 6.1% in 2005, by 7.4% in 2006 and maximum by 8.4% in 2007). This increase was the evidence of the development of construction industry, increase in demand for construction services and increase in construction volumes. The amounts of construction production during the recent years have increased up to 818.1 thousand Lats in 2005, 1131.6 thousand Lats in 2006, 1609.7 thousand Lats in 2007 and 1774.1 thousand Lats in 2008.

Legal framework for construction industry is based on the Construction Law adopted by the Parliament on August 10, 1995, the conditions of which concern all types of structures. The construction industry in Latvia is developing in line with the National Programme on Construction 2012 approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. Its main defined aim is to ensure the development of competitive construction. The essence of competitiveness lies in meeting the demand of national economy with environmentally friendly, healthy, energy and resource saving, aesthetical and modern construction products in diversified economic environment of modern knowledge, innovations and technologies.

To ensure the competitiveness in construction industry the National Programme on Construction has set the following four targets:

1. to ensure the harmonisation of Latvian technical and organisational construction norms with the appropriate EU legislation,
2. to contribute to qualitative and energy efficient construction,
3. to educate competitive construction specialists,
4. to develop competitive construction science. Tasks


defined in the National Programme on Construction are defined closely in line with the National Development Plan for 2007–2013 and Latvia's Sustainable Development Strategy 2030.

The construction is regulated by the Construction Law, Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers and Latvian construction norms. Starting with January 1, 2011, structures will be designed according to appropriate requirements of EUROCODE. The year 2010 is a transition period towards these new norms. Thus until the year 2011 we shall join the common European space of structural calculations and design norms.

The companies of construction industry have united in several professional associations: Association of Latvian Construction Engineers, Latvian Construction Contractors Association, Latvian Association of Consulting Engineers, Association of Infrastructure Engineers, Union of Latvian Road Builders and Latvian Road Association, Latvian Association of Construction Material Manufacturers and Latvia Building Materials Traders' Association, Association of Latvian Window and Door Manufacturers and Latvian Association of Heat, Gas and Water Technology Engineers. Special competition among the Latvian construction companies is established, for example, Latvian Construction Contractors Association arranges regular annual competition „Structure of the Year“. Latvian construction companies have been awarded contracts not only in Latvia, but also abroad: in Byelorussia, the Czech Republic, Finland, Island, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden.

Latvia is well known for its good transport infrastructure and developed production basis. Terminal and runway of Riga International Airport have recently been reconstructed, harbour terminals in Riga and Ventspils have been expanded, European structural funds have been attracted for the reconstruction of the road Via Baltica, several water

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