



International  
Labour  
Organization

## Job evaluation and design of an occupational certification process in the construction industry - Uruguay

The construction industry in Uruguay has grown considerably in recent years. The number of workers rose from 87,392 in 2006 to 112,942 in 2009 and by 2011 the sector generated 7.6% of national employment.

This growth has simultaneously generated an increase in the demand for human resources and in the use of new technologies and processes in the construction sector. Indeed, 91 per cent of people in the sector interviewed said that new technologies have entered the sector including innovations in tools, machinery, construction processes and materials. As a result there is not only a shortage of workers with the requisite skills, but also of relevant, up-to-date and applicable profiles and job descriptions agreed upon by workers and employers: the current profiles and job descriptions largely date back to 1968.

The industry needs an updated occupational structure and set of job descriptions that reflects the new reality. Beyond this, skills recognition and certification, linked to the updated occupation structure, is crucial for connecting workers with opportunities for both employment and relevant skills and career development.

### FACTS AND FIGURES

#### Partners:

Consejo de Salarios de la Industria de la Construcción (wages council for the construction industry), Fondo de Capacitación para Trabajadores y Empresarios de la Construcción (Training fund for workers and employers in the construction industry), Fondo Social de la Construcción (Construction Social Fund).

#### Beneficiary Countries:

Uruguay

#### Timeframe:

2011 – 2012

#### Budget:

USD 410,500

Additionally, when considering that workers in the construction sector in Uruguay tend to have lower levels of formal education, skills recognition and certification can be a powerful inclusion tool for less educated persons usually confronted with serious barriers to training and development opportunities. Currently, there are no mechanisms for skills recognition certification in the construction industry in Uruguay.

### THE RESPONSE

In coordination with employers' and workers' representatives, and funded by the Fondo Social de la Construcción, the ILO Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (ILO-CINTERFOR) commenced an initiative entitled "Job evaluation and design of an occupational certification process in the construction industry".

- To increase the capacities of the Bipartite Job Evaluation Commission, and workers' and employers' organizations to utilize the above referenced outputs, but also to apply the methodology to develop and update job descriptions and certification processes.

The initiative has three primary outputs:

- An updated and agreed upon occupational structure and job descriptions;
- The design of an occupational certification process;

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## RESULTS

To-date (the project runs until April 2014) the initiative has:

- Established the Bipartite Commission of Tasks Evaluation (CBET). It is composed of: the Uruguayan Construction Chamber (CCU); the Uruguayan Construction League; the Single National Union of Construction and annexes (SUNCA); the Uruguayan Association of Private Building developers (APPCU); and, the Coordinator of Construction Industry in the East (CICE).
- Developed and adopted a number of technical products such as: a new occupational structure for the sector which provides the framework for analysis; the format for new and revised job descriptions; the agreement upon relevant factors and elements in the evaluation of jobs; a glossary of terms in order to build a common language between different actors; the form and methodology for the collection and analysis of information; and, a proposal for a competency assessment process.
- Following the design and implementation of a pilot and the hiring and training of a group of analysts, 450 surveys / interviews have been executed with workers from different companies across Uruguay. They have covered jobs related to, for example, masonry and reinforced concrete, carpentry, electrical works, air conditioning, waterproofing, plumbing, gas, glass, painting, foundation piles, metalworking, and elevators.
- Elaborated 200 job descriptions and the CBET has adopted preliminary descriptions of all posts corresponding to: masonry, iron, carpentry, waterproofing, painting, electrical systems, plumbing and gas and fire installations, preparation and placement of glass, plaster, air conditioning and heating, demolitions and restoration.



*“The concretion of an updated job description and the generation of mechanisms to generate and apply the skills certification is a new high priority target”*

*Construction Wages Council*



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## BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

There will be a mechanism for the recognition of workers' existing learning and skills helping to encourage career development and further learning. This encouraged and recognized skills development simultaneously increases the employability of workers and the competitiveness of enterprises.

The tools and methods output are essential to guiding the definition and application of public employment and vocational training policies supporting individual, sectoral, and national economic development.

There will be increased transparency in labour relations as a result of updated job descriptions and these and other tools can be used in collective bargaining and social dialogue.