



Press Release:

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FPS Calls for Immediate Right to Work & Residency for Current UK-Based EU Construction Workers

The Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS), in the wake of the recent general election, is calling on UK government to act swiftly to reassure the status of EU construction workers currently employed within the UK construction sector, of their permanent right to residence and work within the UK post-Brexit.

The plea follows concerns by its [FPS] members that any failure to immediately reassure the status of current EU construction workers risks the possibility of a labour exodus and with it a sudden shortfall in the availability of professional, skilled and semi-skilled workers, required to undertake current and projected large-scale infrastructure projects.

Alasdair Henderson, Chair of the FPS said: "There are very real concerns within the specialist contractor sector, as well as the wider construction industry, that uncertainty over EU workers' right to work and residency within the UK may lead to a sudden scarcity of much-needed labour and skills.

In a sector already suffering from a recognised shortage of skills, skilled professional workers from the EU not only addresses this, but are also critical to ensuring the government's own construction plans (£500bn infrastructure pipeline) marked as essential for UK economic stability and growth, are not put in jeopardy."

There are an estimated 175,000 EU workers, or approximately 8% of the construction workforce ⁽¹⁾ currently employed in UK construction, although the percentage is estimated as much higher for the specialist contractor sector, where cross-border mobility of skills is greater.

Alasdair added: "UK construction has always relied on non-UK workers, not only to fill temporary shortages when demand is high, but to provide valuable educational, technical and cultural diversity, all of which drive innovation and encourage young people to consider the sector as a career option.

Giving EU construction workers the continued right to work and reside within the UK will provide welcome reassurance to the UK construction industry, a sector already being battered by various levies and increased bureaucracy. It will also create an environment of certainty that will allow construction companies to invest, train and recruit locally too – all benefits to any post-Brexit economy."

For more information about the FPS, contact the FPS by email fps@fps.org.uk or visit the FPS website www.fps.org.uk.

⁽¹⁾ *Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)*

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Notes to Editors | About the FPS:

Established in 1964, the Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS) has proactively worked with its members to drive up standards within the industry. From a handful of members back in the days when rotary techniques were coming into use and crane-mounted and hydraulic equipment was in its infancy, the FPS represents most of the leading piling and geotechnical specialists in the construction sector.

Its independent auditing process, which all prospective members need to go through, ensures the highest standards are met, and this audit is repeated every three years to ensure standards are maintained and continually improved.

The FPS works closely with its members to establish standards and provide guidance across all piling and geotechnical areas as well as on wider construction related issues that affect the sector such as Building Information Modelling (BIM). Safety and training are the highest priorities.

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Alasdair Henderson, Chair of the FPS