



National Federation Responses

Contents

National Federation Questions:	2
Austria	2
Belgium	2
Czech Republic	3
Denmark	3
France	3
Germany	4
Hungary	4
Italy	5
Netherlands	5
Poland	6
Romania	6
Spain	6
Sweden	7
Switzerland	8
UK	8

National Federation Questions:

1. **What are your National Federation's main issues currently?**
2. **What do you want from the EFFC?**
3. **Is cross-border working a key issue at the moment? Would the EFFC benefit from having a WG on this topic?**

Austria

1. Evaluation of the drill master course, completion of drilling manual, planning of seminars / courses in 2021 under COVID 19 (including cancellation of VÖBU FAIR 2021).
2. Nothing at the moment.
3. Yes, and yes.

Belgium

1. Key Issues:
 - a. Corona measures and work limitations.
 - b. Training and certification:
 - i. We need to find a new partner to organize this in the Flemish speaking part.
 - ii. We still have not found a final agreement for mutual recognition with the Dutch Federation and Certification body CVT.
 - c. Piling certificates are currently being developed by the Normalisation Commission to define installation factors for the different piling systems.
 - d. Groundwater management during excavations (increasing regulations...).
 - e. Developing professional status.
2. To help developing mutual recognition of National training systems at least between adjacent countries. Long term: develop a European training system.

To help developing a better understanding and status for our Profession (=proudness).
3. Certainly, in this period of Covid-19 because of the National regulations (quarantine, ...). Not sure a WG will help solving this problem.

Regulations for International transport are getting stricter. There have been initiatives in the past to get this on the European agenda but with no result.

Czech Republic

1. Deepening shortage of qualified staff (operators and technicians) and worrisome trend of it. General lack of clients share on site geotechnical risks.
2. To provide examples, experiences and programmes from other members to follow.
3. Cross-border working is not an issue presently.

Denmark

1. No activities in the NF at the current time. Employees are participating in different working groups (HSE, working platform).
2. Information from ongoing WG's + possibilities to join.
3. Cross border working is a key issue at all times – A WG could perhaps be beneficial, but key topics have to be defined.

France

1. The anticipated low level of activity post Covid-19 is the main issue. We anticipate less investment in the private sector, whereas the major works linked with the Paris metro are now slowing down. The French recovery plan does not seem to include the type of works that are carried out by our members.
2. What do you want from the EFFC:
 - a. The EFFC could address at the European level the reduction of the carbon footprint in our sector. Soffons is working on this issue together with the French Federation of Civil Contractors.
In this field, a particular topic is the transition of the equipment from fuel to other greener energy. Discussion with equipment manufacturers are ongoing, particularly with hydrogen power. But we are lacking a more global understanding at European level of the issues related to the tax evolution, the regulation, the incentive to invest in new equipment
 - b. The sanitary crisis has shifted the attention from safety to Covid-19 only. Our members are incurring more accidents since the end of the lockdown. So, initiatives and good practices to enhance the general Safety awareness in the period of Covid-19 is welcome.
 - c. Examine in more detail the opportunity of our sector in the European Recovery plan.
 - d. Continue to coordinate and lobby in the European Standardisation Committee, so the interest of our contractors are better considered. For example: the new EN 206 concrete standard, the evolution of tremie concrete quality control & responsibility regime.

3. This is an issue only for the members of the Soffons who have a significant international activity. These contractors are indeed suffering from the difficulty to cross the borders (quarantine). They experience difficulties to get accurate information that change daily and to anticipate their operation with these uncertainties. Unsure how EFC working group could help on that topic.

Germany

1. Key Issues:
 - a. Climate protection
 - b. Digitalisation
 - c. Economic situation against the background of Corona
2. If necessary - revision or updating of the Carbon Footprint Calculator.
3. Yes, it is a topic. BUT before a separate working group is set up on this subject, the specific problems of the individual countries should first be collected.

A distinction would have to be made between country-specific issues country A to country B and general problems. In addition, a distinction would have to be made between problems which should be dealt with by the EFC and European policy issues which must be solved by the National Federations (HDB) in co-operation with the FIEC.

A specific topic that is gaining importance in short term is cross-border work with the UK (keyword Brexit)

Hungary

1. Key Issues:
 - a. External environment: Shrinking Market, stopped private projects, delayed state project due to state debt. Much lower prices and available capacity in the country.
 - b. Internal at NF: due to Covid-19 and the market challenge, the cooperation willingness within the Federation diminished. We will appoint a new president starting from next year to refresh the activity within the Federations.
2. Keep going, continue the great job. As to be proposed maybe more digital data sharing / involving young engineers.
Proposal also for a COVID WG to share best practice/solutions or the HS WG to address the subject specifically.
3. For the everyday business it is not a key issue, we do not observe a shortage in supply due to cross-border works. In the wake of Paks Nuclear Power plant project in Hungary (to be started next year) this would be a key issue. A WG would be welcomed, I think we can benefit of this joint work.

Italy

1. The main AIF issue is to achieve a national regulation on procurement done more selective criteria relate to the qualification of specialized construction companies.

AIF Specialized companies work in subcontracting and are not properly protected by National Legislation. There is a national problem of contractual dumping between companies that are in the construction sector and that must be solved to reduce unfair competition.

Another target is to improve and increase the level of representativeness of specialized companies in Italy and encourage them to join AIF.

The effects of the economic crisis and the serious pandemic underway are worrying; these are factors that can lead to further market depression. The actions of the National Government and the unified response of Europe will also be fundamental.

During 2021, AIF will proceed with the renewal of the Board and Chairmanship and the new national representation structures will have to be considered

2. The spirit of EEFC founders still to be active. Hence, committed for promoting/protect the Federations affiliates.

Specifically the EEFC should be more focused on supporting the smaller companies due to their less structured organization providing periodical and practical guidelines for Contractual/HSE/QC/Technical issues,

It would be useful if EEFC describe the activities of the working groups through synthetic ppt presentations to be forwarded to companies. Minutes of meetings can be difficult for not-insiders to understand. Power point presentations or schematic documents on the work of the groups could help the National Associations to share EEFC's activities more easily.

3. This issue is quite critical and as said above, it can be a useful topic to be treated in the EEFC context. Therefore, a focused WG could be deemed as the right tool, as long as a quick activation and prompt accomplishment is pursued

Netherlands

1. Key issues:
 - a. working in public environment. We just issued a guideline within the NVAF.
 - b. Working on height
 - c. NOX and CO 2 exhaust
 - d. Noise reduction
 - e. Working platforms
 - f. Working in polluted soil and water
 - g. Foundation restriction under old buildings

- h. Sinking of the land, because of dewatering
 - i. Covid-19
- 2. No specific things. In general, we are happy with the EFFC and if there is an item, Ciaran is willing to talk about it.
- 3. Yes, this is an issue and we are interested in a WG cross border issues.

Poland

1. The real main issue we are still working on currently is topic of working platforms for heavy foundation equipment. We do this through close contact with the formal organization associating the largest Polish construction companies - "Agreement for Safety in Construction". This requires us to organize a series of training sessions by large companies explaining the idea and the need to use platforms. The end result will be the dissemination of this element of works on Polish construction sites. We agreed among the members of the PZWFS common guidelines for design and execution of working platforms for different machines and in different soil conditions. This short document is added to every offer of our members as agreed with foundation specialists and members of "Agreement for Safety in Construction". By doing this we confirm the joint acceptance of the whole construction industry the necessity to build platforms and give in every soil condition and for specific type of machines guidelines for budgeting and design of this works. Additionally, we plan to arrange design trainings for representatives of general contractors.
2. The main interest is to follow and learn about work standards functioning already in European countries, select best practices and introduce them on our local market if we evaluate them as better than actual practices in Poland.
3. In the first phase of COVID-19 this spring some international companies noticed problems with cross – border working. The main reason was movement restrictions and quarantine obligation for people crossing borders. In case we believe that we can have real influence on rules of employee migration between European countries we should secure on our sites undisturbed continuation of works. This topic is important above all for bigger and internationally active market players. In case actual COVID-19 status will be more permanent, activation of special working group can be beneficial.

Romania

In this moment, the Romanian association is on standby waiting for a volunteer as next president and are therefore unable to respond to the above questions.

Spain

1. Main Issues include:
 - a. Fall in economic activity.
 - b. Uncertainty about the future of the industry.

- c. Decrease in quality and safety standards in some companies in the industry due to the market situation.
 - d. Lack of consistency in the requirements from the Public Administrations for the
 - e. validation of the experience (classification) that allows to compete in projects of "our specialties".
 - f. Disproportionate weight (and without reasonable limits) of the "price" to the detriment of the technique, methodology, operational safety considerations, etc. in both private and public tenders.
 - g. The safety of workers in our member companies, in general, and in particular because
 - h. of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - i. The low consideration of the Special Foundations and Ground Treatment expertise, within the Construction industry, being an essential activity and of great responsibility.
2. Lobbying at European level to unify requirements in quality and safety levels, to fulfil European regulations regarding the demands to be made on companies in terms of training, compliance with labour legislation and the fight against any type of company that, in order to remain on the market, employs illicit or illegal means. To continue promoting and sharing the experiences from the different members of the Federation, through the Working Groups that integrate the EFFC.
 3. It's not a priority for our companies now. It may be an objective in situations far from the pandemic we are suffering.

Sweden

1. Our main issues are as before procurement & fair competition, standards, safety, training & competence.

Fair competition is generally a focus question, and problem, in Swedish construction industry. We have a lot of statements about 'safety first' but in reality very few follow-ups.

The amount of false certificates is one example and a big concern. Our members put a lot of effort and costs into this, educating their employees. Which is useless if the customer doesn't have the knowledge, tools or guidance for a correct evaluation. We are working with other specialist organizations with the aim to coordinate this.

Regarding European 'driving licenses' we have great doubts about the possibilities to really follow up. As an example, in Sweden the construction federation has a mandatory id-card, ID06 (from 2006), which so far has not made any impact on undeclared work, it's thriving as the cost for the 'serious' companies. I told you before that we work with this inside Safe also, unfortunately we have excluded another company.

2. Focus on issues for fair competition and safety. The platform certificate is a very good example of EFFC work!

3. Yes, it sure is. In Sweden we definitely have an issue between construction companies (often small, mid-size) with employees/labour living in Sweden, and other companies (mostly bigger and cross border working) with almost no labour living in Sweden. The latter have often a completely different 'attitude' about safety, salary and working hours.

Switzerland

1. New Swiss Law on public procurement with hopefully lower price impact (new: sustainability, innovation).
2. Overview and forecast on European top-level topics, especially in H&S.
3. There are only few problems, it is no topic in SUI.

UK

1. 2020/21 Strategic Priorities
 - a. Health
 - i. Labour only best practice
 - ii. Dust suppression guidance
 - iii. Fatigue management best practice
 - b. Safety
 - i. Placing of tubes inside piles best practice
 - ii. Rig operator training requirements (tickets and simulators)
 - c. Environmental
 - i. Ensure use of carbon calculator
 - ii. Produce sustainability series of webinars
 - iii. Road map to achieve net zero emissions by 2050
 - d. Quality
 - i. Update of FPS audit schedules
 - ii. Lobbying of clients to encourage use of FPS audited piling contractors
 - e. Human Resources
 - i. Produce mentor and internship programme
 - ii. Establish level 6 Degree apprenticeship
 - iii. Produce trailblazer apprentices
 - iv. Increase member engagement
2. In the UK we seem to have plateaued in our efforts to reduce accident frequency. We would be interested to study other countries progress and learn what we can from their structural and cultural development. Albeit talking to Andi K it seems we are actually ahead of the curve. I agree, a European approach is more "common sense" and less formal, whereas in the UK we are more rules based. That having been said they have no more accidents than us. My experience is that being a site-based tradesman is a more respected profession than in the UK, with those involved being more educated and less inclined to take risks. I also think their technical work on large diameter bored and D Wall support fluids is good and that the FPS should support the EFC in its dealings with the EU version of BuildUK.

3. Yes – but expect this would be a major project.