

Professional Services in Construction

January 2007

Sector Profile

Overview

Sector Definition Construction is a very broad sector impacting on a number of professional groupings. For the purposes of this strategy the professional services element of the sector is defined as: architects, engineers, surveyors, project managers, and facilities managers.

Summary The UK construction industry contributes around 8% of GDP. Exports are of the order of £10 billion whilst domestically the construction industry is a major deliverer of key government programmes such as housing, hospitals, infrastructure and regeneration.

The sector is even more significant to the N Ireland economy. Output was valued at 4.1 billion euro, representing 13% of total construction output in Ireland and 13% of N. Ireland's GDP. This demonstrates an increase of 17% from 2000-2004. In Northern Ireland (NI), the principal household projection indicates an increase of 116, 000 households between 2001 and 2015, with households in the North, South and West of the province increasing at a faster rate.

Opportunities appear best in the hospitality and office sectors. There has been a huge surge in demand for large office space in city centre locations in both the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and NI. There is also growing investor interest in the retail segment in both ROI and NI and this should boost the value of the market. Construction within the health sector will remain top of NI government's priority for the next few years with many planned improvements being initiated using PPP arrangements.

Employment Figures cannot at this stage be disaggregated from the construction sector. However discussions with professional bodies indicate significant growth in employment opportunities.

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Key Markets	<p>Key markets identified by DTI are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regeneration UK Initiatives – Russia, Poland, China, Ukraine, Dubai• General Market Opportunities – Russia, East/Central Europe, Turkey, China, Hong Kong, USA, Iraq• Niche markets: Spain, Ukraine, Algeria, Jordan, Nigeria, Qatar, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Trinidad.
The Future	<p>The Olympic Games will generate a £10 billion programme for sports stadia, accommodation and infrastructure investment with the construction bill anticipated to be some £2.5 billion.</p> <p>Significant opportunities exist in the provision of specialist services, for example; dam design and construction, wave technology, geotechnics, specialist design for the health sector.</p>

Our approach to the sector

Invest NI has identified this sector as one that offers significant potential for growth through export markets. After substantial consultation with individual firms, government, and professional bodies such as ACE, RIBA, and RTPI (see Industry Links below), it has proposed a series of interactions to help the sector explore growth opportunities. The key objectives of this strategy are:

- To grow the professional services in the construction sector through export sales,
- To help in the development of innovative and specialist services to be sold by the sector,
- To ensure that the ICT infrastructure of NI based companies facilitates successful competition with international players,
- To develop collaborative partnerships and the successful tendering for large international projects,
- To develop appropriate HR policies to ensure the successful recruitment and retention of professional staff.

Delivery Mechanisms

- Market and Service Reports
- Research/Dissemination of statistics
- Industry Briefing seminars
- Overseas Missions and Seminars
- Overseas Exhibitions
- Service and Process development assistance
- Independent review of ICT capability for sector players
- Establishment of sector cluster for collaborative bidding
- Advice on HR policies. Liaison with DEL/DED to identify a range of actions to improve the recruitment and retention of staff.

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Initiatives

- **Construction Advisory Group:** To establish a construction advisory group as a source of sectoral advice to Invest NI.
- **Regeneration:** To join the “Regeneration UK” initiative to promote NI’s capability in regeneration overseas.
- **London 2012:** To identify and promote opportunities to N Ireland companies and provide assistance to business development in this area.

Specialist Services

Examples include:

- To identify innovative developments in the sector and disseminate details to all players – best practice visits,
- To investigate and promote opportunities emerging from both energy and environmental legislation and constraints,
- To provide objective advice and support to the sector on technology developments.

Business Development Solutions

Invest NI offers an extensive portfolio of advice, assistance and support which can be tailored to meet the needs of companies either in particular sectors, or who are tackling specific challenges within their business. This covers areas such as strategy development, people development, research and development, exporting, energy management and e-business. Full details of our programmes and services are available from the [Business Development Solutions section](#).

Events

See [Invest NI's Event Planner](#) for more events, and see also the [Trade Events Programme](#) for trade missions in your sector.

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Industry Links

Construction Employer's Federation	www.cefni.co.uk
Royal Society of Ulster Architects	www.rsua.org.uk
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors	www.rics.org
Association of Chartered Engineers	www.aceni.org
Royal Institute of British Architects	www.riba.org
Royal Town Planning Institute	www.rtpi.org.uk

Useful Information Sources

Guides to the market research sources which are available from Invest NI's Business Information Services can be downloaded from the Publications A – Z section of the website (under S for Sector Guides).

Contacts

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