



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 was generating 7.6 per cent of national employment. This growth has simultaneously created 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 noted 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 a set of job descriptions that reflects the new reality. Skills recognition and certification, linked to the updated occupational structure, are crucial to connect workers with opportunities for both employment and relevant skills and career development.

What is more, given 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, who normally face serious barriers to training and development opportunities. There are at present no mechanisms for skills recognition and certification in the construction industry in Uruguay.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Partners:

Consejo de Salarios de la Industria de la Construcción (Construction Industry Wages Council); 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 country:

Uruguay

Timeframe:

2011 – 2012

Budget:

USD 410,500

THE RESPONSE

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

The initiative has three primary outputs:

- An updated and agreed-upon occupational structure and set of job descriptions;

- The design of an occupational certification process;
- An increase in the capacity of the Bipartite Task Evaluation Commission (CBET), and in the ability of workers' and employers' organizations to make use of the outputs, as well as the application of the methodology to develop and update job descriptions and certification processes.



RESULTS

By April 2014, the project had:

- Established the CBET, composed of: the Uruguayan Construction Chamber (CCU); the Uruguayan Construction League; the Single National Union of Construction and Affiliated Sectors (SUNCA); the Uruguayan Association of Private Construction Developers (APPCU); and the Eastern Construction Industry Coordinator (CICE).
- Developed and adopted a number of technical products such as: a new occupational structure for the sector, providing the framework for analysis; the format for new and revised job descriptions; an agreement on 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.
- Conducted 450 surveys and interviews with workers from different companies throughout Uruguay, following the design and implementation of a pilot, and the hiring and training of a group of analysts. These 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.
- Formulated 200 job descriptions, and the CBET adopted preliminary descriptions for all posts related to bricklaying, work with iron, carpentry, waterproofing, painting, electrical systems, plumbing and gas and fire installations, preparation and placement of glass, plaster, air conditioning and heating, demolition and restoration.

"The achievement of an updated job description and the generation of mechanisms to generate and apply the skills certification is a new high priority target"

Construction Industry Wages Council



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BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

A mechanism is now available for the recognition of workers' existing learning and skills, which will encourage career development and further learning. This in turn increases the employability of workers and the competitiveness of enterprises.

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

Updated job descriptions will result in increased transparency in labour relations, and these and other tools can be used in collective bargaining and social dialogue.