**PRESS RELEASE**

**Digital SMEs ready to offer technologies and skills needed for construction companies to join Industry 4.0**

Today, the European DIGITAL SME Alliance and its Italian member CNA ICT have organised an event on the digitisation of the construction sector in the framework of [SMAU](https://www.smau.it/milano17/pages/international-eng/?lang=en), the main ICT trade fair in Italy. The event discussed on how to bridge the existing gaps for construction SMEs to join industry 4.0.

Stagnating productivity has particularly affected the construction sector during the period of economic crisis. Digitisation gives players in the construction industry opportunities to improve their productivity. However, only 6% of construction companies make full use of digital planning tools today. “Construction is now seeing its own “digital revolution” – underlined Lutz Köppen from the European Commission – “Industry 4.0 and Building Information Modelling are concepts that are increasingly adopted by the actors in the construction value chain as they offer tools to deliver cost savings, productivity and operations efficiencies while improving the quality of infrastructure”.

The involvement of small and medium-sized enterprises is crucial to unleash the full potential of construction businesses: “think Small first”. Eugenio Quintieri, Secretary General of the European Builders Confederation stressed on the numbers: “Small and medium-sized enterprises are responsible for 80% of the industry's output, while only small businesses (less than 50 employees) are responsible for 60% of production and employ 70% of the industry's active population. Achieving the objectives of Industry 4.0 in the field of construction, inevitably depends on the involvement of these companies”.

Fabio Massimo, Vice President of the European DIGITAL SME Alliance (associate member of UEAPME), pointed out that "digital industry companies are ready to offer the technologies and skills needed to transition to Industry 4.0. Several industrial sectors, supported by incentive policies, are investing in digital transformation. We believe that the construction sector in Italy as well as in Europe has great potential for renewal and that the market offers solutions more and more suited to the needs of SMEs operating in the industry". The initiative could pave the way for further cross exchange of practices and training experts twinnings involving other interested EU and National /Regional SMEs organizations. The event will be followed by a technical meeting with the European involved actors, SMEs Academy Avignon and CNA EU Affairs Office Mr. Claudio Cappellini, to focus on the follow-up of the initiative in order to contribute to an EU sector based joint strategy more “SMEs friendly”.