Key Points:

* **The average annual growth rate in the period 2016-2020 is projected at 9.1 per cent**.
* The volume of construction output by 2020 is forecast to reach €20.2 billion (in 2015 prices), or just over 10% of GNP.
* **The industry is in recovery phase and is on course to experience the most positive outlook for construction in a decade, provided it has the skills available to meet the demands on the industry.**
* **Based on the expansion and replacement demand, the total labour requirement over the next four years is around 120,000 workers.**
* ***98 per cent of all construction enterprises employ less than 10 employees***
* Although there has been substantial growth in most economic sectors, the strongest employment growth has come in the area of construction where the number employed is up over 31 per cent since Q1 2012
* When persons indirectly employed in those firms and services supplying the construction sector are included (estimated at 40 per cent of direct employment), the total number of persons employed was 191,700 (current) or 9.5 per cent of the total workforce.
* With the exception of electricians, every apprentice trade experienced losses greater than 70 per cent between the height of the construction boom and the end of 2015
* With less direct employees as tradespersons, firms are less inclined to take on apprentices, resulting in a lack of training opportunities for new entrants.
* Table 5.1 page 45 – suggests close to 500,000 jobs between direct and indirect
* According to Table 5.3, total direct employment in construction is forecast to increase to 212,700 persons by 2020.
* The more disaggregated projections show the strongest growth in percentage terms over the five years is expected in the demand for Plasterers, Floor and Wall Tilers (+153%) and Bricklayers and Masons (+144%). In absolute terms, demand is expected to be highest for Carpenters and Joiners (+15,300) and Labourers (+14,500).
* Over the three-year period September 2013 to September 2016, there were some 3,650 new apprentice registrations in the construction sector, generating an average of 1,217 per year. This compares with an average of almost 2,600 over the period 2005 to 2015. Thus there needs to be an urgent ramping up of apprenticeship registrations, if the industry is to have the capacity to deliver in line with policy targets.
* The difference between the 2015 actual intake and the projected 2020 intake is particularly striking in respect of the so-called ‘wet’ trades, bricklayers, plasterers and painters and decorators. The current intake of apprentices into these trades is very low, reflecting the fact that until 2015 residential development was virtually confined to a few thousand self-builds.
* Having identified the skills requirement, the next step is to ensure the education and training system can deliver the prerequisite numbers with the necessary training and skills to deliver buildings and infrastructure to the standards required.