

# FEM CON

Empowering  
Women in  
Construction



## MODULE 1

# Stereotypes affecting women in construction



[www.femalesinconstruction.eu](http://www.femalesinconstruction.eu)



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A woman with dark hair, wearing safety glasses and large black ear protection, is focused on her work in a workshop. She is wearing a plaid shirt and dark overalls. She is holding a piece of wood and using a tool, possibly a chisel or a similar hand tool, to work on it. The background is a blurred workshop with various tools and equipment. The lighting is warm and slightly dim, creating a focused and industrious atmosphere.

“

“We can each define ambition and progress for ourselves. The goal is to work toward a world where expectations are not set by the stereotypes that hold us back, but by our personal passion, talents and interests.”

- Sheryl Sandberg



# Module Structure

01

## Introduction to the Construction Industry

Overview of the construction industry and the different roles within it.  
The challenges and rewards of working in construction.  
Common stereotypes and misconceptions about women in construction.

02

## Breaking Stereotypes

In-depth analysis of common stereotypes affecting women in construction.  
How to challenge and overcome these stereotypes?  
Inspirational case studies of successful women in the construction industry.

03

## At work: Creating a More Inclusive Workplace

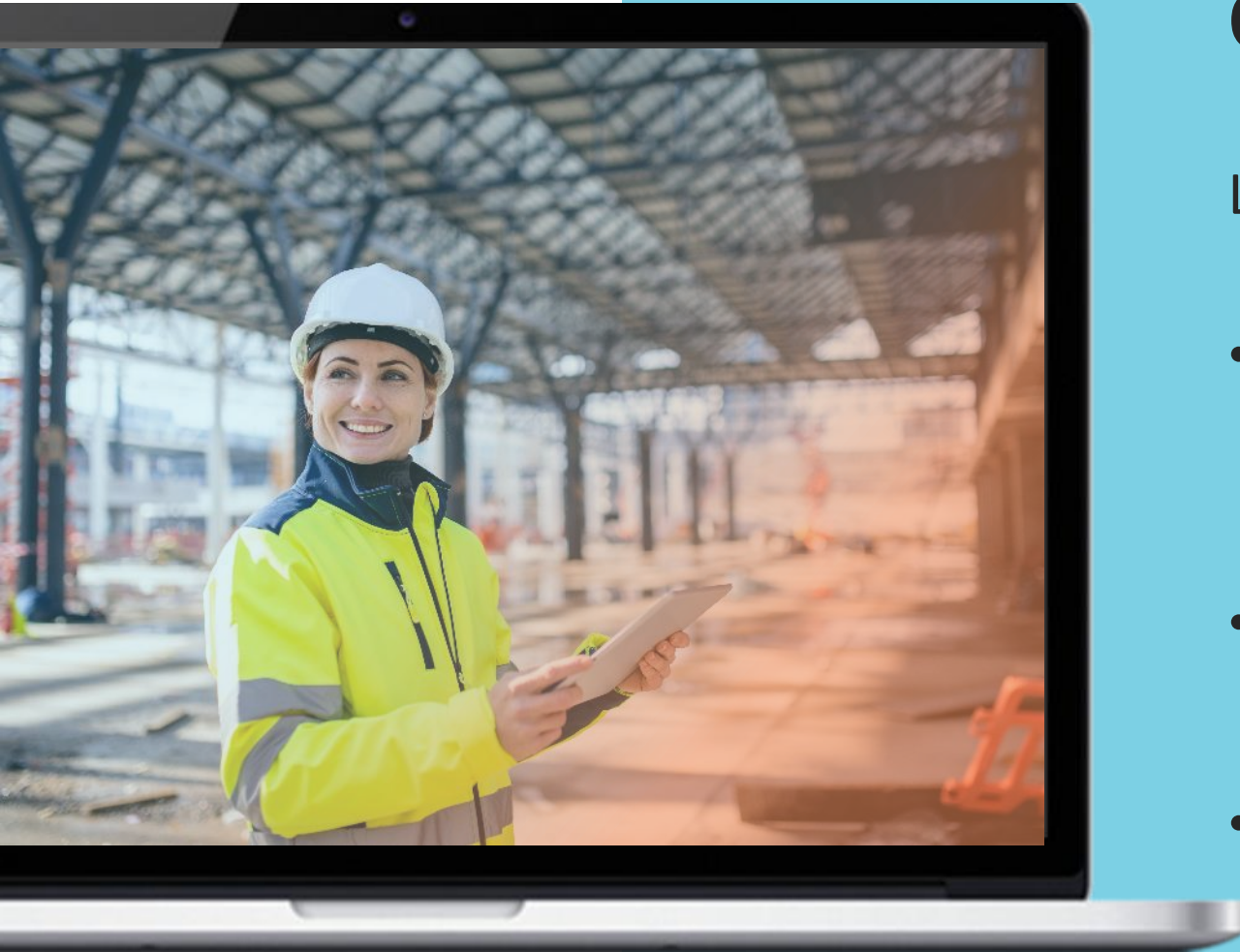
Strategies for recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in construction.  
What can women do to demand a more inclusive and supportive workplace?  
Exploration of mentorship programs and training opportunities for women in construction.

# 01

## Introduction to the Construction Industry

Let's explore ...

- The overview of the construction industry and the different roles within it
- The challenges and rewards of working in construction
- Common stereotypes and misconceptions about women in construction



# Some of the key roles within the construction industry include:

 <p>1</p>	<h3>Engineers</h3> <p>Professionals who design and oversee the construction of infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and tunnels. Get advice from the <a href="#">SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS</a>:</p>	 <p>3</p>	<h3>Construction Workers</h3> <p>Read this article: <a href="#">7 Advantages to Women Working in Construction</a></p>	 <p>5</p>	<h3>Facility Managers</h3> <p>Professionals who oversee the maintenance and management of buildings and other facilities, ensuring that they are kept in good condition and are safe for use.</p>
<h3>Architects</h3> <p>Learn how to become an architect in each European country: <a href="https://www.ace-cae.eu/access-to-the-profession/how-to-become-an-architect/">https://www.ace-cae.eu/access-to-the-profession/how-to-become-an-architect/</a></p>	 <p>2</p>	<h3>Project Managers</h3> <p>Professionals who oversee the planning, execution, and completion of construction projects, ensuring that they are completed on time, within budget, and to the required quality standards</p>	 <p>4</p>	<h3>Building Inspectors</h3> <p>Professionals who inspect buildings and structures to ensure that they comply with building codes and regulations and are safe for occupancy.</p>	 <p>6</p>

# How Your Strengths Add Value – A Guide for Women in Construction

## **ACTION:**

To help you to assess your strengths in terms of looking at the construction industry as your potential career path, we recommend you read this guide on [www.healthwelldone.com](http://www.healthwelldone.com)

**CLICK ON THE IMAGE TO READ**

<https://healthwelldone.com/women-construction-add-value/>



# The broader challenges and rewards of working in construction

The construction industry offers a range of rewards and challenges to those who work in it. On the one hand, construction work can be physically demanding, risky, and highly competitive, with limited opportunities for advancement – if one does not continue to advance the skills (**that is why we recommend you always learn**).

On the other hand, many workers find the work to be **rewarding and fulfilling**, with competitive pay, diverse career paths, job security, and the satisfaction of hands-on work that produces tangible results. As with any industry, those who are considering a career in construction should carefully weigh the challenges and rewards to determine if it is the right fit for them.

**In the context of FEMCON, the construction industry provides an opportunity for women to break barriers, challenge stereotypes, and make a tangible impact in building a better future.**

# 5 challenges of working in the construction sector





# 5 rewards of working in the construction sector



# Ireland's first female crane operator, aged 19, hopes to inspire other women

Click to watch

Read more about Kate:

<https://www.irishcentral.com/news/community/kate-fahey-irish-crane-operator>

*Click*  
TO WATCH



# Common stereotypes and misconceptions about women in construction

Despite increasing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in the construction industry, women still face a range of common stereotypes that can affect their experiences and opportunities.

By challenging these stereotypes, the industry can attract and retain talented women professionals who can contribute to its growth and success.

Vocational educators, policymakers, companies, and the workforce, including men and women, **can all challenge these stereotypes.**

Let's explore the most common stereotypes are and what are their sources...

# Common stereotypes affecting women in construction



## **STEREOTYPE 1: Physical Ability**

The stereotype that women are not strong enough to perform physically demanding tasks in construction.



## **STEREOTYPE 2: Skill Level**

The stereotype that women lack the necessary skills and knowledge to perform well in construction.



## **STEREOTYPE 3: Safety Concerns**

The stereotype that women are at greater risk for injury and accidents on construction sites.



## **STEREOTYPE 4: “Fit” in the Workplace**

The stereotype that women do not “fit” in with the traditional male-dominated culture of construction.

# THESE STEREOTYPES ARE WRONG!

## THEY ARE DISCRIMINATORY & INCORRECT PREJUDICE

Women have proven time and again that they possess the necessary physical ability, skills, and knowledge to excel in the construction industry.

By recognizing the talent and potential of women in construction and breaking down these stereotypes, the industry can benefit from a more diverse and skilled workforce.



## SAFETY HAS NO GENDER

Safety concerns on construction sites should not be gendered, and all workers, regardless of gender, should have access to a safe work environment.



## DIVERSE WORKPLACES ARE SUCCESSFUL

The idea that women do not fit in with the traditional male-dominated culture of construction is outdated and ignores the benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.



**Implenia**

# Women at Implenia

Implenia is Switzerland's leading construction and real estate service provider, operating across Europe including a strong presence in Germany.

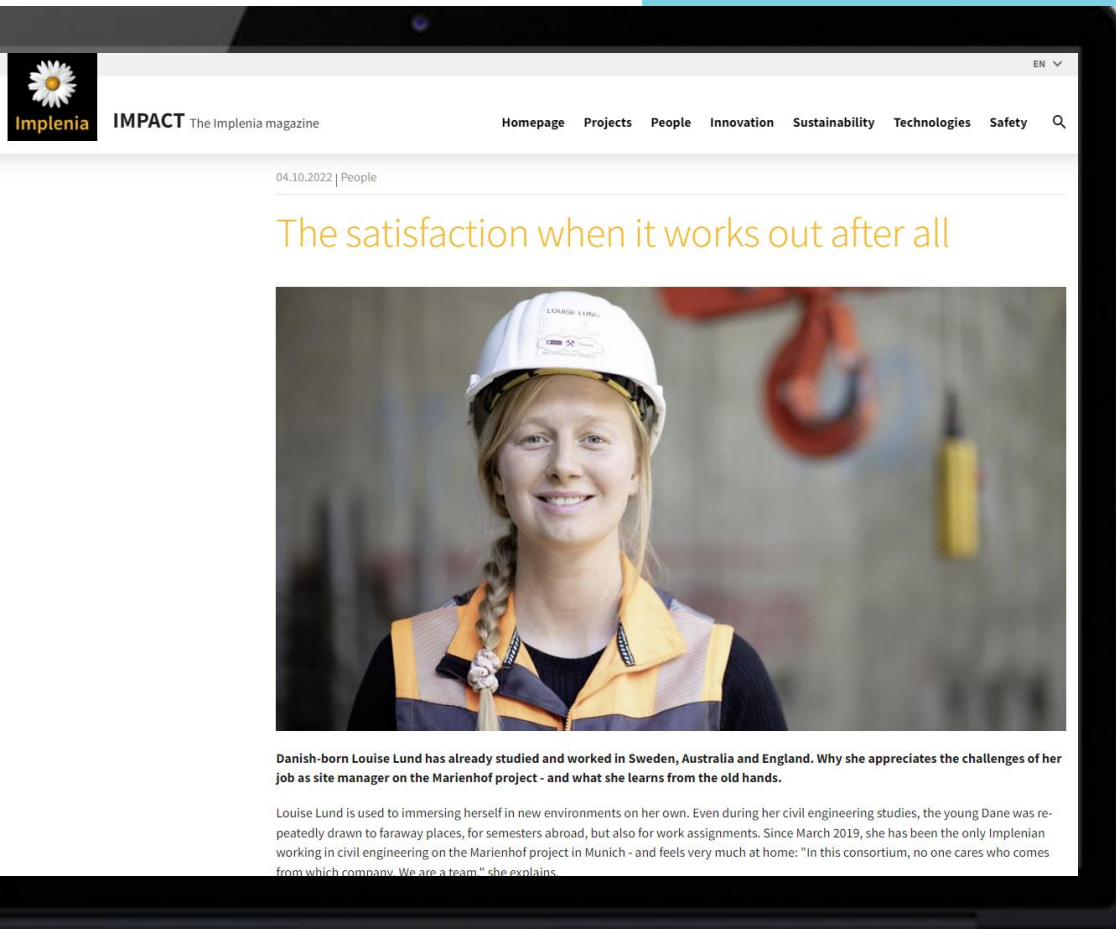
Implenia is Switzerland's leading construction and real estate service provider, operating across Europe including a strong presence in Germany.

The company is recognizing the need to implement and support gender equality.

WATCH THE VIDEO to get inspired!



# Implenia shows that the career in construction can be fulfilling for women



At Marienhof, Louise is responsible for reinforcement and concrete - "and everything on the outside," as she explains. She loves challenges - and that's a good thing. "On this construction site, nothing is normal at all. Due to the cramped location in Munich's city center, we have to divide up the little space available very precisely," she says of her day-to-day work. On-site warehousing can be forgotten, "just-in-time delivery" is required here. With no less than 17,000 tons of rebar, organizing them is anything but a piece of cake.

In general, Louise doesn't shy away from challenges. "What I enjoy the most? When it looks like something isn't going to work at all - and then it does! That's really satisfying!"

Read her full story here:

<https://impact.implenia.com/en/article/the-satisfaction-when-it-works-out-after-all/>

# Research reveals

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**44% of women feel lack of female representation in construction industry.**



## **Interesting Findings in Ireland**

While barriers to entry were acknowledged, 45% say they had considered a career in the industry. The top three choices were architecture at 26%, engineering at 16% and project management at 11%.



### **Read the full report:**

<https://www.mummyspages.ie/research-reveals-44-of-women-feel-lack-of-female-representation-in-construction-industry->





# 02

## Breaking Stereotypes



Let's explore ...

- In-depth analysis of common stereotypes affecting women in construction
- Discussion on how to challenge and overcome these stereotypes
- Networking with successful women in the construction industry

# Girl's Day in Germany



Every year technical enterprises, enterprises with technical departments and technical training facilities, universities, and research centers are invited to organize an open day for girls - Girls' Day. Girls' Day – 'Future Prospects for Girls' initiated a large campaign in which a wide range of professions and activities is presented to girls of 10 years upwards. The vocational choices of girls are influenced in a very positive way. For companies, Girls' Day has evolved as an important instrument of their recruitment policy.

Girls' Day encourages the surroundings of the young women - ie families, school, media and employers - to participate in the campaign and change their common attitudes towards vocational orientation. Information material, an all-embracing interactive website and an individual advisory service provide support for all target groups. The campaign includes a scientific evaluation.



*"The construction industry is not just a male domain"*

**READ THE FULL STORY:**



<https://www.girls-day.de/unternehmen-institutionen/gute-beispiele2/die-baubranche-ist-keine-reine-maennerdomaene>

## "The construction industry is not just a male domain"

Andrea Uffelmann, STRABAG



There are still far too few women working in the construction industry. It is often referred to as a purely "male domain". STRABAG would like to do away with this

# In-depth analysis of common stereotypes affecting women in construction

Where do these stereotypes come from? They come from challenges at industry level, that need to be solved.

Delve into Section 2.1 of [FEMCON Reach and Teach Toolkit](#) to find out exactly what challenges are the sources of these stereotypes:

<https://femalesinconstruction.eu/resources/femcon-inclusion-reach-teach-toolkit/>



# In-depth analysis of common stereotypes affecting women in construction

To summarise the FEMCON Reach and Teach Toolkit, the construction industry has two main challenges in attracting women into the sector: **the lack of visible female role models and mentors** and **public perception**. These challenges constantly feed into the creation of stereotypes, but this does not mean they are here to stay. The absence of women in senior management roles has created a lack of female role models, discouraging young women from choosing construction as a career choice and inhibiting their advancement in the industry. Furthermore, recruitment practices that include fair and objective evaluation criteria are needed to fight the stereotypes.

Public perception is another significant challenge faced by the construction sector. Many young people are unaware of the opportunities available within the industry and view it as an "old school" and non-diverse field.

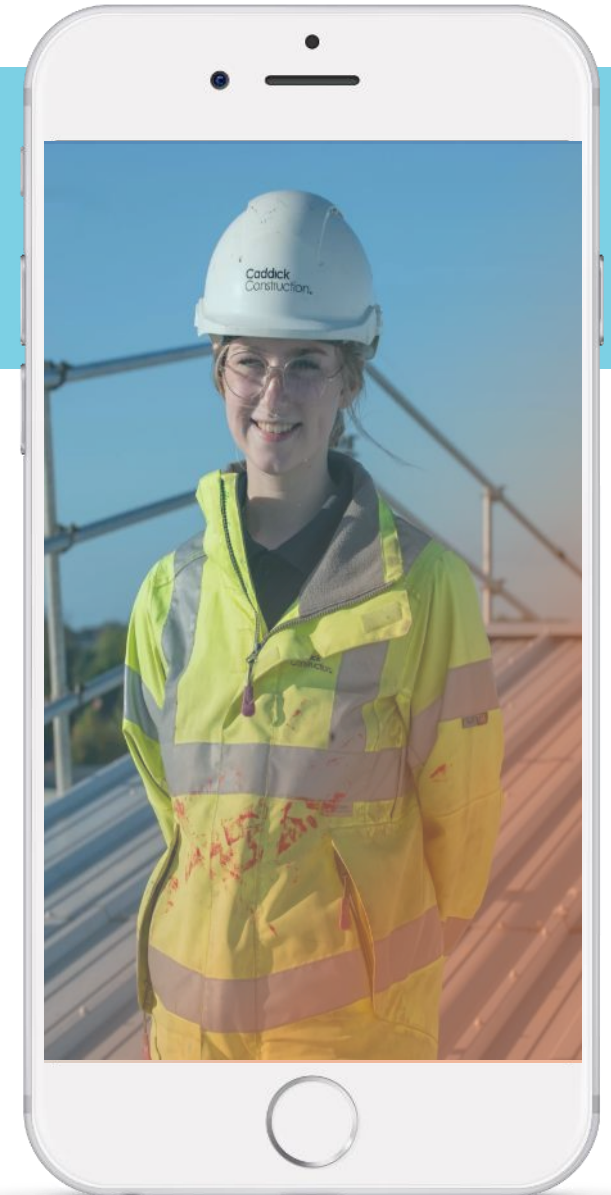
Mentoring programs can be very effective in supporting women during training and employment but also in spotlighting female role models. In addition, the construction industry needs to position itself more effectively to promote a coherent narrative of the broad range of opportunities available for women. Awareness-building efforts need to start at secondary school level to increase knowledge of the range of jobs available within the sector.

# Explore stereotypes in action

Georgia is a trainee site engineer and admits people are often surprised when she tells them she works on construction sites.

This is due to stereotypes. But that does not mean Georgia doesn't enjoy her job. In fact, she is inspired to break the stereotypes:

<https://www.thesun.ie/fabulous/10112593/female-builder-construction-worker-shocked-site-best-job/>



“

*“A lot of what I do is groundwork for big building projects, so it’s really rewarding to know that none of the final build would be possible without those foundations.*

*I’m so proud everyday to do what I do, especially in a male dominated environment. Inspiring other women to get into it is definitely something I love doing. One thing I hadn’t anticipated when taking up a trade, was the diversity of each working day and the amount of amazing people you meet..”*

- Georgia Harper

SOURCE: <https://www.thesun.ie/fabulous/10112593/female-builder-construction-worker-shocked-site-best-job/>



# 6 ways to challenge and overcome these stereotypes

1. **Advocacy and Awareness:** Advocating for women in construction, raising awareness of the challenges they face, and celebrating their successes and contributions to the industry.
2. **Education and Training:** Providing education and training opportunities for women to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in construction.
3. **Recruitment Efforts:** Proactively recruiting and promoting women in construction to help break down the stereotypes and create a more diverse workforce.
4. **Mentorship Programs:** Developing mentorship programs to provide support and guidance for women in construction.
5. **Safety Measures:** Implementing safety measures and policies to ensure the safety of all workers, regardless of gender.
6. **Creating a Supportive Workplace Culture:** Encouraging a culture of inclusivity and respect in the workplace and promoting diversity and equality.



# What can women do to challenge and overcome these stereotypes?

Strategy	How ..
1. Pursue Education and Training	Women interested/in construction should seek out opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the industry. Seek out apprenticeships, vocational courses, and even online training programs.
2. Seek Out Mentorship and Support	As highlighted, women in construction can benefit from connecting with mentors and support networks, both within their companies and through professional organizations who provide guidance and advice on navigating the challenges of working in a male-dominated industry.
3. Advocate for Themselves and Other Women	Women in construction can speak out against stereotypes and advocate for themselves and other women in the industry. This could include participating in diversity and inclusion initiatives, sharing their experiences and insights, and challenging biases and misconceptions.
4. Network and Collaborate	Women in construction can build relationships with colleagues, industry leaders, and other professionals to expand their knowledge and opportunities, attending industry events, joining professional organizations, and participating in online forums and communities.

# What can CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES do to challenge and overcome these stereotypes?

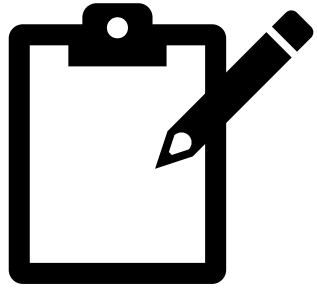
Strategy	How
1. Create Inclusive Policies and Practices	Construction companies can adopt policies and practices that promote inclusivity and respect in the workplace, including zero tolerance for discrimination, flexible work arrangements, and gender-neutral job descriptions.
2. Provide Training and Development Opportunities	Companies can provide specific training and development opportunities for women in construction to enhance their skills and knowledge. This could include on-the-job training, leadership development programs, and mentorship initiatives.
3. Encourage Diversity and Inclusion	Construction companies can prioritize diversity and inclusion in their recruitment and hiring practices, and proactively seek out women and other underrepresented groups for open positions.
4. Foster a Supportive Workplace Culture	Companies can create a workplace culture that supports and empowers women in construction, such as providing opportunities for career advancement, recognising and celebrating their contributions, and promoting work-life balance.

# What can VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS do to challenge and overcome these stereotypes?

Strategy	How
1. Provide Gender-Sensitive Training	Vocational educators can provide increased access to training and education content that is sensitive to gender differences and address the unique challenges facing women in construction – reach and teach.
2. Promote Role Models and Success Stories	Educators can highlight the accomplishments and successes of women in construction to inspire and motivate the next generation/students. This could include inviting successful women in construction to speak to students, showcasing their achievements, and sharing success stories through media and social networks.
3. Encourage Hands-On Learning and Collaboration	Vocational educators can provide opportunities to engage in hands-on learning and collaborate with peers and industry professionals. This can help build women’s confidence and competence in the skills required for a career in construction.
4. Foster Partnerships with Industry	Educators can establish partnerships with construction companies and industry organizations to provide students with real-world experience and exposure to the industry.

# What can POLICYMAKERS do to challenge and overcome these stereotypes?

Strategy	How
1. Develop Policies and Regulations that Promote Inclusivity	Policymakers can develop policies and regulations that promote inclusivity and diversity in the construction industry that go beyond the very minimum - regulations that mandate equal pay, workplace safety, and anti-discrimination measures.
2. Support Programs that Encourage Women in Construction	Policymakers can provide funding and support for programs and initiatives that encourage and support women to progress in construction careers.



## Learning Activity



- Reflect on slides 23- 26 and the ways that different stakeholders can overcome challenges and stereotypes?
- Which of the above actions resonates with you most?
- Which ones could you influence? How?

# Networking with successful women in the construction industry

Start overcoming challenges and stereotypes. We encourage you to join the [FEMCON Women in Construction LinkedIn Group](#). This group is a great platform for networking, sharing ideas, and supporting each other's professional development in the construction industry.

**By joining this group, you will have access to a community of like-minded women who are passionate about making their mark in this field.**

Networking for women in construction is like building a strong foundation for a skyscraper - it's essential for growth and success.

According to a LinkedIn survey, 85% of women say that having a professional network is important to their career success.

So, take the next step in your career journey and join the [FEMCON Women in Construction LinkedIn Group today!](#)





## Frauen in der Baubranche

Listed group



LinkedIn

# Frauen in der Baubranche: Networking Group Example from Germany

*Click the bell to see the group*



In Germany, **Frauen in der Baubranche** group supports the networking of women in the construction industry

*“With this group we want to encourage women from the construction industry to get to know each other, network and exchange ideas. We believe that together we can make a positive impact and create more diversity in the construction industry.”*



## A task: Joining a network of women in construction

1. Create or update your LinkedIn profile, here are some tips:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/business/sales/blog/profile-best-practices/17-steps-to-a-better-linkedin-profile-in-2017>
2. Join this network:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12735551/>
3. Introduce your self: Say hi, say what is your interest or experience in construction, ask a question, comment on someone's post.



# 03



## AT WORK: Strategies for Creating a More Inclusive Workplace

Let's explore ...

- Strategies for recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in construction
- What can women do to demand a more inclusive and supportive workplace
- Exploration of mentorship programs and training opportunities for women in construction

# Strategies for recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in construction

## What companies can do...

- **Review and revise recruitment practices**
  - Review your job descriptions and qualifications to ensure they do not have any implicit gender biases.
  - Expand your recruitment channels and seek diverse candidates by partnering with organizations that support women in construction.
- **Establish a mentorship program**

Implement a mentorship program to provide support and guidance to women in your company. This can be a valuable tool to help women navigate the industry and develop their skills.
- **Promote work-life balance**

Recognize that women may have unique responsibilities outside of work and provide flexible work arrangements where possible. This can include offering telecommuting options or flexible schedules
- **Provide equal opportunities for professional development**

Offer equal opportunities for training and professional development to all employees, including women. This will help women advance in their careers and build their skills.
- **Establish a diversity and inclusion committee**

Create a committee focused on promoting diversity and inclusion in your workplace. The committee should be comprised of employees from various departments and levels within the organization.

# Strategies for recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in construction

## What companies can do...

- **Conduct unconscious bias training**  
Provide training to all employees on unconscious bias and how to recognize and address it in the workplace. This can help to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and equitably.
- **Implement diversity metrics**  
Set goals and establish metrics to track the progress of diversity and inclusion initiatives within your company. This can help to identify areas for improvement and measure the success of your efforts.
- **Celebrate gender diversity**  
Host events and activities that celebrate gender diversity in your workplace. This can include cultural awareness events or guest speakers who can share their experiences and insights.
- **Create a safe and supportive work environment**  
Provide resources for female employees who may need additional support.
- **Create a network of support**  
Establish a network of support for women in construction, both within your company and through partnerships with external organizations. This can help to provide a sense of community and support for women in the industry.

# AT WORK: What can women do to create a more inclusive and supportive workplace?



Speak up



Advocate for change (join groups and associations)



Network



Seek out mentors and allies



Empowering Women in Construction



Educate others



Be a role model



Support other women

# Exploration of mentorship programs and training opportunities for women in construction

1. **Research industry associations:** Many industry associations have mentorship programs and training opportunities for women in construction. Research the associations in your area and reach out to learn more about their programs.
2. **Look for networking events:** Attend networking events that are specifically geared toward women in construction. If no events exist, create them ! These events should provide opportunities to connect with other women in the industry and share experiences.
3. **Reach out to other women in the industry:** Reach out to other women in the industry (role models) and ask about their experiences with mentorship programs and training opportunities. They may have valuable insights and recommendations.
4. **Create a bespoke program:** If you cannot find opportunities, do the research and preparation to start a program or partner with an industry association to provide these opportunities.

# Exploration of mentorship programs and training opportunities for women in construction

5. **Online research:** Look for online resources that focus on mentorship and training for women in construction. This could include blogs, websites, and social media groups that are dedicated to supporting women in the industry.
6. **Government resources:** Check with your local government to see if they offer any training or mentoring resources for women in construction.

# Be Inspired by ...

## The European Women in Construction & Engineering Awards

The aims of these awards are to

- make the construction and engineering sectors more enticing to women.
- create role models for women considering a career in these sectors, while encouraging companies to employ and train more women in these industries.

FOLLOW THE LINK TO FIND OUT MORE:

[https://www.wiceawards.com/index.html#ZE\\_JZ3ZByF4](https://www.wiceawards.com/index.html#ZE_JZ3ZByF4)





## Be Inspired by ...

Women in Construction Europe. A career boosting event for women to learn from industry leaders, maximise the success of their career and business, and join a vibrant community of like-minded professionals building a diverse, inclusive industry

[www.women-in-construction-europe.com](http://www.women-in-construction-europe.com)



**300+**  
**ATTENDEES**

**2**  
**DAYS**

**30+**  
**SESSIONS**

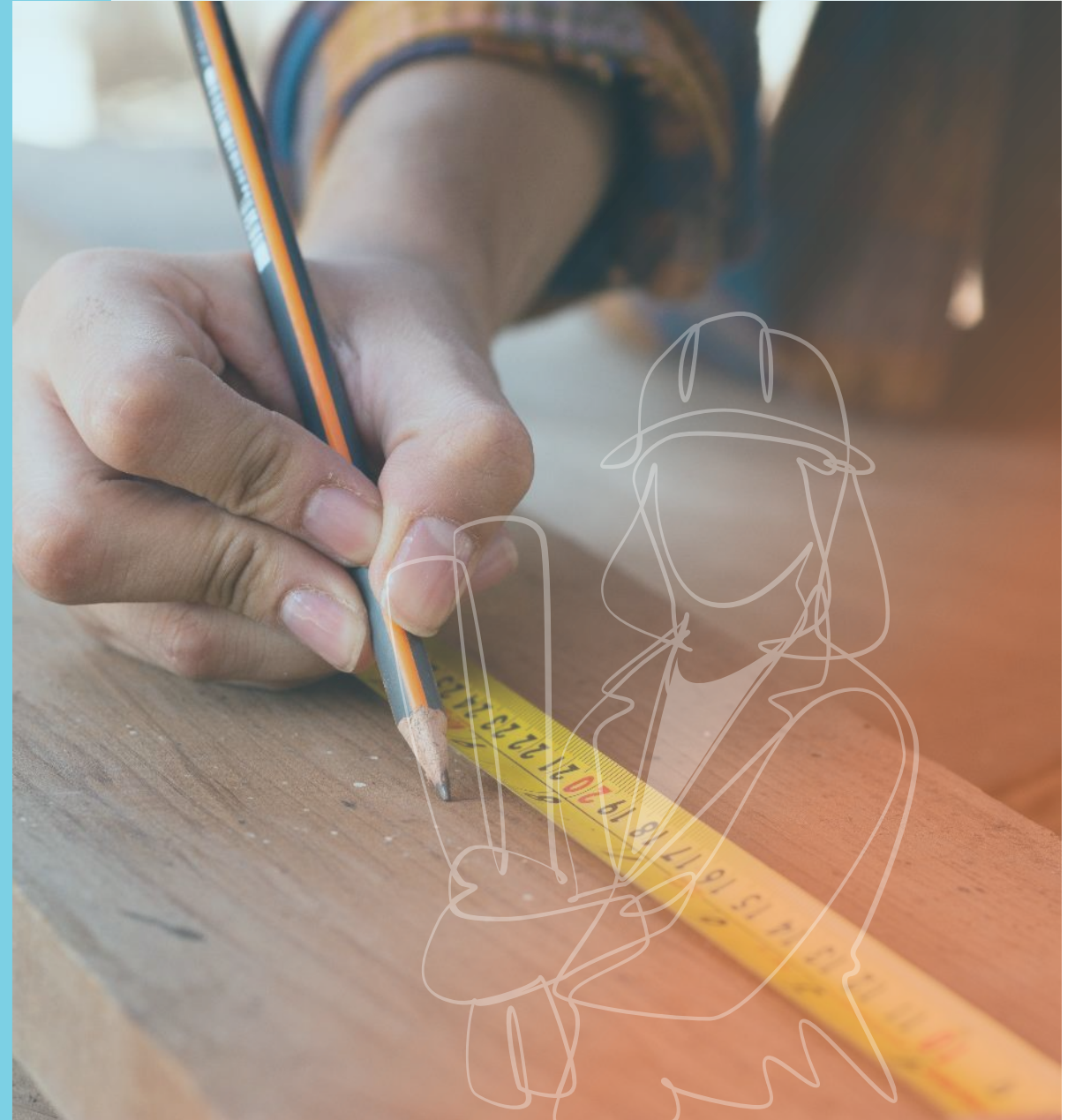
**25+**  
**SPEAKERS**



# Assessment

On your own or with a group of learners, reflect on this lesson,

- Has your understanding of the stereotypes improved?
- What action are you going to take to overcome the challenges of stereotyping?



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# Thank you

Any questions?

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