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## **Downsizing deals - Bulgarian construction sector to lose 35,000 workers by 2009 end**

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It is reported that a total of 35,000 construction workers in Bulgaria will have lost their jobs by the end of 2009 after the economic crisis hit the sector at the beginning of the year.

Mr Simeon Peshov chair of Bulgarian Construction Chamber said that 1,500 construction firms had already frozen their activities. In his words, the construction deals dropped by 35% starting September 2008.

Mr Peshov noted that February and March 2010 would be the hardest period for the Bulgarian construction sector, and urged the signing of more infrastructure contracts under the EU funded operational programs Transport and Regional Development in order to preserve the jobs of skilled engineers and architects.

According to the Bulgarian Construction Chamber, the construction market in Bulgaria amounted to BGL 12.5 billion in 2009. This is a decrease from the record BGL 16 billion in 2008, which Mr Peshov believes would not be reached ever again.

He also said that the construction sector was the first one to feel the economic crisis but is also going to be the first one to recover.

During his meeting with Regional Development Minister Mr Plevneliev, Mr Peshov requested that the value-added tax be returned by the state to the construction firms within 14 days because any greater delays would put them in a very tough situation. The Construction Chamber has also demanded greater transparency in the selection of executers of public procurement procedures.

(Sourced from [www.novinite.com](http://www.novinite.com))

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