

Latest survey reveals the numbers of women in construction could be worse than predicted

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The number of females in professional construction roles is less than many analysts predicted, according to a survey carried out by specialist construction recruitment firm, One Way.

In a survey of professionals from across the industry, the firm found that 65% of respondents work in a company where less than 5% of the workforce is made up of women in an actual construction role.

When asked about the challenges for women in construction, over half (58%) stated that businesses themselves are to blame due to a range of issues such as stereotyping in the recruitment process and a lack of commitment from employers. Just over a third (35%) felt that it simply isn't a popular career choice for women.

The survey – carried out as part of the firm's #GirlsAllowed campaign which aims to bring together those in construction and education outlets to encourage more girls into the sector – also revealed that the majority (83%) believe that a lack of construction career education in schools is creating a concerning gap in female talent.

Reassuringly, over 80% of those surveyed agreed that they would personally get involved in an initiative to help address the lack of women in construction.

Paul Payne, Managing Director of One Way, commented on the findings:

"What is clear from these results is that employers need to do more to both attract more women into the industry and embrace them once on board. The results of the survey clearly demonstrate that the sector has a bad reputation when it comes to hiring females and given the severity of existing skills shortages, this simply cannot continue. While we were expecting to find low levels of employment, some of the figures were certainly below our initial perceptions, which makes the need for greater collaboration through initiatives such as the #GirlsAllowed campaign more vital now than they have ever been."

"While it's great to see so many respondents commit to taking more action, there were some concerning views that came to light that I feel need to be altered immediately. Aside from some of the gender stereotyping comments, other remarks suggested that some in the industry itself don't think construction is a sector that women should be in. This is quite simply untrue and is an attitude myself and the team at One Way certainly want to turn around."