

**Interview with José Manuel Galindo, President of the *Asociación de Promotores Constructores de España* (APCE)**

**“Prices of new housing will go up by 36% in 2010, according to our forecasts”**

**1. - In your opinion, what advantages and mutual benefits can your association and the show derive from your presence on the Organising Committee?**

The main advantages of forming part of the Organising Committee are being able to participate in defining the objectives and contents of the show, and getting first hand knowledge of all the initiatives.

**2. - The construction sector has been one of those most affected by the crisis. Do you think 2011 will be a year of recovery?**

With regard to residential building, stock will reach the ceiling in 2011, due to the improvement which we are already noticing and which responds to objective aspects, such as the increase in sales and purchases of housing since April 2009, the rise in granted mortgages and an ever decreasing drop in prices. Demand is starting to materialise; it had been stagnant for years and this is the optimal time to buy: prices have become competitive, there is less and less choice and, now, the financial effort to buy a house is lower than ever.

There is also an incipient and selective rise of new promotions in areas of opportunity, in which there is not much supply and more demand. However, this incipient improvement is subject to the consolidation of the finance system, the current situation of which makes it difficult to obtain loans, and to the economic climate in general, which does not provide us with much joy.

We estimate that, in 2010, around 300,000 housing units will be sold, 36% more than in 2009. Therefore, if this trend continues, we will see an increasingly recovered market. Everything will depend on how the economic situation evolves and how confident citizens are.

**3. - What role could Construmat play in reactivating the sector's economy?**

Our sector needs forums like Construmat to allow construction professionals to interrelate. In this sense, the show is a good meeting point for all construction agents to keep up to date and exchange experiences about their professional activity.

**4.- This year, 2010, and as an initiative that arose at Construmat 2009, the first Rehabilitation and Sustainability Congress, organised by the *Colegio de Aparejadores, Arquitectos Técnicos e Ingenieros de Edificación de Barcelona, CAATEEB*, will be held. Is rehabilitation one of the best formulas for the sector to overcome the crisis? What other measures should be promoted?**

In the first quarter of the year, rehabilitation accounted for 26% of all authorised works, six points higher than in the first quarter of 2009. This figure indicates the importance of this segment of real estate activity. Nonetheless, the latest Government initiatives in this area appear to be “lame”, do not encompass the requests of the sector and pass as measures that promote the rehabilitation of entire buildings and of districts, which would make it necessary to adapt some regional and local regulations.

With regard to other measures, collaboration between all agents is essential in order for the sector to have clear and transparent information and an exhaustive knowledge of the real estate market.

It is necessary to have the opinion and collaboration of all: Public Administrations, real estate and construction sectors, financial entities, sector professionals, etc. And, in particular, with regard to residential building, there should be a housing stock localisation map, by geographic area and by type, which indicates what is for sale and at what price.

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