



Homes for Ireland's next generation won't come from more hands – they'll come from building smarter

Dr Alan Hore July 22, 2026

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Ireland is building more homes than at any point in more than a decade.

Completions reached 36,248 in 2025, up from just over 30,000 the year before, according to the ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary for Spring 2026.

While the industry deserves credit here, the national conversation keeps returning to a single question: where will we find the people to build more?

But this question doesn't consider the incredible potential of modern methods of construction.

Read more: ['We have a job to do to educate people' – The push for modern methods of construction](#)

The ESRI expects around 38,500 completions in 2026 and close to 40,500 in 2027, while also noting annual output needs to approach 50,000 to meet national targets.

The gap between those numbers will not be closed by recruiting more construction professionals alone, because the constraint is not simply how many people work in the sector, it is how much each hour of their work delivers.

That is a matter of productivity.

The construction industry has a significant opportunity to boost the output of housing, while ensuring high-quality delivery and addressing sustainability targets, by upskilling professionals in the technologies now available to achieve this productivity.

Build smarter, not harder

This is where modern methods of construction (MMC) come in.

The term covers a broad range of approaches to building, from using panelised timber frame and light gauge steel frames to full volumetric modular units, 3D printing in concrete, automatic manufacturing with robotics, and digitally driven design through building information modelling.



What unites them is shifting construction activity from the site into a controlled manufacturing environment and standardising structural designs and building components.

Individual components are designed digitally to ensure regulatory compliance and ease of installation, built with factory precision and quality assured before they leave the floor, and transported to site for assembly and installation.

Off-site manufacturing, by its very nature, means works can begin independent of the site, often before the foundations are even complete.

The result is faster and more predictable delivery of housing, consistent quality, and less material waste. >

Read more: [*'Shift in sentiment' – Real estate investors returning to Ireland as homebuilding trends up*](#)

But MMC also offers construction professionals improved working conditions.

Controlled factory settings mean a safer environment and a set place of work, with less travelling site to site and an improved work-life balance.

MMC can also expand and enrich the work that people do, offering more career fulfilment and transferable skill sets.

The MMC Action Plan of 2025 identified skills development as key, backed by government and training providers, to accelerate its adoption.

That's where the Skillnet MMC Accelerate Initiative comes in.

Delivered through a partnership between Skillnet Ireland and Construction IT Alliance (CitA), the initiative is designed to help businesses, education providers, industry bodies, and construction professionals to strengthen their understanding of MMC while developing the practical skills required for long-term adoption. >

Talk of MMC isn't theoretical. Deepening engagement with it is already happening on Irish factory floors and construction sites.

Turning ambition into delivery

The largest housebuilders in the country are using off-site manufacturing partners at scale.

Irish engineering firms are delivering data centres and life sciences facilities across Europe using off-site solutions.

MMC companies are leading projects building thousands of houses, apartments, and schools and hospitals across the country.

A new generation of Irish manufacturers is proving that highly engineered, factory-built components can be designed, manufactured, and installed to the highest quality while meeting targets for sustainability.

There is a talent story here too, and it is an optimistic one.

Read more: [*Architects must get over their fears around modern methods of construction*](#)

A construction industry built on digital design, robotics, advanced manufacturing, and sustainability is an industry that can attract people who would never have considered it before.

This includes more women, people of different backgrounds, and young people who want careers focused on technology enablement and climate sustainability.

That transition is being made possible through initiatives such as Skillnet MMC Accelerate focused on giving the small and medium enterprises that make up the overwhelming majority of the Irish construction industry the confidence to upskill in and adopt modern methods of construction.



It is about bringing more people into the sector and ensuring they have the modern construction skills to succeed.

MMC is the most impactful option we have for achieving this. The countries that build fastest while still maintaining quality and sustainability standards this decade will be the ones that build smartest. Ireland has every capability to be among them.

Dr Alan Hore is co-founder and director of the Construction IT Alliance (CitA), and project lead of Skillnet MMC Accelerate
