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# Ceemet event on how to tackle skills shortages in the MET industries

**Ceemet**

Rue Belliard 40/ Belliardstraat 40,  
1040, Brussels, Belgium

T: +32 (0) 2 786 30 45

E: [secretariat@ceemet.org](mailto:secretariat@ceemet.org)

🌐 [www.ceemet.org](http://www.ceemet.org)  

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**On 23 October 2023, Ceemet organised an event in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in the framework of the European Year of Skills, with the aim of providing MET industries' solutions on how to tackle skills and labour shortages. Further, in view of the upcoming 2024 EU elections, Ceemet officially presented its contribution "For a more competitive industry in a stronger Europe: a Ceemet perspective".**

Pietro de Lotto, President of the CCMI, opened the event by thanking all speakers. He emphasized that the variety of actors present in the EESC prove the importance of cooperating to tackle the skills gap. According to the President, *"to be competitive, the EU needs skills from everyone: citizens, employees and employers."*

Ceemet Vice President, Nancy Pallares, introduced the first panel by presenting the challenges and consequences of skills shortages in the EU and more specifically on MET companies. She also presented Ceemet's contribution for the next EU elections highlighting that one of the priority issues will be skills. Despite the fact that education & training is a national competence, training funds are available at EU level, and it is thus critical to make them easily accessible for MET companies, the vast majority of which are SMEs. Indeed, Nancy Pallares explained that *"we need to make Europe inspirational to attract the talent that we need. Likewise, we need to support SMEs so that they can train the workforce on the skills needs of changing labour markets."* She added that *"this targeted support must be deployed for SMEs so that they can develop the appropriate training programs."*

Both the Commission representative and the Member of the European Parliament welcomed the MET industries key requests in the area of skills for the next European mandate. Miguel Fernández, from the EU Commission, highlighted some of the EU initiatives that the Commission is deploying in the field of education and training, and notably referred to the upcoming talent mobility package and the Pact for skills. He stressed that the Pacts for Skills are particularly relevant as they illustrate the necessary *"cooperation between all actors, companies, training providers, social partners which is critical to address the skills shortage issue"*. From his perspective, MEP João Albuquerque gave his views on the priorities that should be worked on and reinforced at all levels in the field of skills, such as building bridges between Vocational Education & Training and higher education, fostering continuous training of teachers, as well as developing the necessary labour-market, digital and social skills of the workforce. He further explained that the right policies to bring women into the labour market need to be put in place. His views were supported by the panelists when he declared that *"it is essential to train the trainers to keep them up to date with the changing trends of the labour markets"*.

## About Ceemet

Ceemet represents the **metal, engineering and technology-based industry employers** in Europe, covering sectors such as metal goods, mechanical engineering, electronics, ICT, vehicle and transport manufacturing.

Member organisations represent **200,000 companies** in Europe, providing over **17 million direct jobs** and **35 million including indirect jobs**.

Ceemet is a recognised European **social partner** at the industrial sector level, promoting global competitiveness for European industry through consultation

This event was also the opportunity for companies representatives to share good practices to provide a highly skilled workforce. Indeed, the MET employers from different countries presented several solutions to illustrate Ceemet's perspective on how to tackle skills and labour shortages in the near future.

Opening the second panel, Pierre Berlioz, from UIMM (France), presented the "Joint Observatory for Jobs of the Metal industry" thanks to which the MET sector collects precise data on economic trends, companies and technology evolution to study the evolution of skills and anticipate future skills needs. According to Pierre Berlioz, it is indeed *"crucial to ensure that skills are adapted to the real needs of the labour market and this is possible thanks to the information collected via the studies produced by the Observatory"*.

Eva van der Boom from FME (the Netherlands) presented the Dutch program aimed at attracting women and young people to STEM studies. A workforce with a STEM background is crucial for the MET industries to move forward. *"In order to attract more young people to the MET industries, it is important that tech lessons are included in the curriculum of primary schools, so they experience how interesting and applicable technology is"*, she highlighted.

Finally, Leena Pöntynen, from TIF (Finland), explained how to increase the visibility and attractiveness of Vocational Education & Training as a first-class training choice that leads to quality employment in the MET industries. She also insisted on the need to improve the training to deliver the skills that companies need. She highlighted that *"the worlds of education and work speak different languages. It is thus important to improve the training so it better meets the needs of the working life"*. Further, Leena Pöntynen referred to the need to find a solution to the teacher shortage in the technology sector in Finland.

In her concluding remarks, Delphine Rudelli, Ceemet Director General, mentioned the active role that Ceemet and the MET industries have been playing in the area of skills long before "skills" became one of the top priorities of the Commission. This is why over the years the MET sector has put in place many initiatives at national level to tackle the skills shortages. *"Anticipating, adapting, training teachers, upskilling, reskilling, transferring skills, these are some of the solutions, among many others, on which policy makers, companies, workers, social partners, have to work together to ensure the industry will have the necessary skilled workforce in the very near future"* concluded Delphine Rudelli.