



**Ceemet**

European Tech &  
Industry Employers

# The right to training, an issue for the national level

Position paper

December 2025

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

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## About Ceemet

Set up in 1962, Ceemet is the European employers' organisation representing the interests of the metal, engineering and technology-based (MET) industries with a particular focus on topics in the areas of employment, social affairs, industrial relations, health & safety and education & training.

Ceemet members are national employers' federations across Europe and beyond based in 20 countries. They represent more than 200,000 member companies, a vast majority of which are SMEs.

Ceemet members provide direct and indirect employment for 35 million people and cover all products within the MET industrial sectors, detailed below.

Together, these companies make up Europe's largest industrial sector, both in terms of employment levels and added value, and are therefore essential to ensuring Europe's economic prosperity.



# Executive summary

- Training must fulfil the dual objective of enhancing the worker's competencies while supporting the company's operational and strategic goals, thereby ensuring both individual employability and overall business competitiveness.
- The role of the EU in the area of education and training should serve to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of Member States' training systems.
- The EU should continue to promote and strengthen STEM education within national education systems through sustained action at the European level.
- The EU also has an important role to play in terms of investment in skills development.
- The EU should, thus, enhance the precision of its funding priorities and simplify administrative and procedural requirements, thereby ensuring more effective and timely access to financial support for training initiatives, both for employees and employers.
- The EU must respect the principle of subsidiarity and cannot introduce an individual right to training. Training and its governance must remain the responsibility of Member States.
- An explicit right to training at the EU level will not solve the problems of motivation to engage in training, nor remove the barriers to accessing training.
- Training should not be approached as a matter of individual right, but rather as a question of creating the right environment and conditions for both employers and employees to develop skills effectively.
- MET companies have invested and will continue to invest significantly in the continuous training of the workforce.
- In our sector, social dialogue – at sectoral and company level – has long proven its effectiveness and remains indispensable for identifying and addressing the needs of both employers and employees in terms of skills, as well as for ensuring better access to training for workers and better alignment with companies' requirements.







## Introduction

On 5 March 2025, the European Commission presented the Union of Skills<sup>[1]</sup>, an overarching strategy aimed at strengthening skills and competences across the European Union and addressing persistent skills shortages affecting European enterprises.

For many years, the metal, engineering and technology (MET) industries have consistently emphasised the need for an education and training system that is better aligned with the needs of businesses. Our sectors are increasingly facing a shortage of skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). This situation has been exacerbated by the growing demand for ICT (information and communication technology) skills driven by the digital transition. It is further complicated by the green transition, which is reshaping production processes and product design and requires the acquisition of new skills. Against this backdrop, MET employers have welcomed the Union of Skills initiative<sup>[2]</sup>, which aims to address these various challenges. This roadmap contains various strategies and tools to address the skills shortage. However, these EU actions must respect the principle of subsidiarity and should not aim at creating a right to training at the EU level. They should rather support the diversity of sectoral training systems.

Indeed, MET employers firmly believe that a Union of Skills is more effective if it relies on non-binding recommendations, and it can generate significant added value by encouraging social partners to take action at the national or company level.

The right to training is already implemented – by law or collective agreements – in certain EU Member States such as France or Italy, and access to training is already recognised by the EU as a fundamental right<sup>[3]</sup>. Rather than creating a new right, in reality, there is an urgent necessity to establish training systems that are more effective and responsive, capable of addressing labour market demands and facilitating timely adaptation to technological innovation and the green transition.

This document provides Ceemet's opinion on the right to training and puts forward a series of recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of European training systems and a stronger participation rate in training.

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[1] Union of skills is the European Union roadmap presented by the European Commission on 5 March 2025 that will aim to empower people across the EU with the skills they need to better fit with the labour market and the evolution of businesses. It proposes several action plans to support, for example, basic skills, STEM, vocational education and training, upskilling and reskilling of workers, talent etc and ensure the EU competitiveness.

[2] MET industry perspectives on the Union of Skills, Ceemet, 22 July 2025

[3] Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union EUR-Lex - 12012P/TXT - EN - EUR-Lex, 2012

# 1

## The right to training in the MET sector

There is a diversity of training systems among the Member States, which differ due to historical, cultural, and structural approaches. Those training provisions have also been adopted at the sectoral level to ensure a better alignment of skills with the specific needs of industries and regional labour markets. Some trainings are even informal and provided directly inside the company to upskill the worker to a new machine, for example.

### 1. Recognising, not defining: the EU's role in the right to training

The European Union already possesses a solid legal and policy framework guaranteeing access to education and training. Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union explicitly recognises the right of every individual to education, as well as to vocational and continuous training.

This fundamental right is further reinforced by the European Pillar of Social Rights<sup>[1]</sup> (EPSR), which sets out a comprehensive set of principles underpinning fair and inclusive labour markets. Among these, particular emphasis is placed on the right to access education, training, and lifelong learning, ensuring that all individuals can acquire and update the skills necessary to participate fully in society and the labour market.

While MET industries fully acknowledge the importance of training, they consider that education and training systems are and should remain the responsibility of Member States. This prerogative in education, vocational training, youth and sport falls within the scope of supporting powers and does not fall within the remit of the European level in accordance with Article 4 TFEU<sup>[2]</sup>.

The EU may only intervene in supporting, coordinating, or supplementing the action of its Member States. Legally binding EU acts must not require the harmonisation of Member States' laws or regulations. Each country has developed its own educational and training framework reflecting national specificities, labour market structures, and industrial needs. It is therefore essential to preserve this subsidiarity and proportionality, ensuring that EU-level initiatives complement, rather than replace, national competences in this field.

[1] European Pillar of Social Rights adopted in 2017 established 20 principles such as education, training and long-life learning. It gives targeted objectives for the EU to achieve by 2030 such as : at least 60% of all adults should be participating in training every year by 2030. European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan – Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

[2] Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2012, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/tfeu\\_2012/oj/eng](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/tfeu_2012/oj/eng)

## 2. National MET training systems: why industry engagement delivers more than a right to training

Within MET companies, which represent 35 million direct and indirect jobs in the EU, employees have access to training. These training courses take place during working hours and are paid. Their duration varies from country to country and is mostly based on collective agreements or even an explicit right to training at national level, as is the case in France<sup>[1]</sup> or in Italy<sup>[2]</sup>.

Building on these existing frameworks, in recent years, adult learning<sup>[3]</sup> has been steadily increasing, particularly due to the promotion of lifelong learning by the EU, the Members States and thanks also to several programmes and communication campaigns led by the social partners. Adult training and lifelong learning have been also highlighted by the need for employees and managers to adapt to digital and green transitions.

Furthermore, MET companies have invested and will continue to invest significantly in training<sup>[4]</sup>.

Furthermore, in some countries, such as in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Denmark, networks of employer organisations have even created their own training centres or own training programmes to supplement traditional education and training systems and to better match their own skills needs (cf. Annex 2).

**Adult learning (last 4 weeks) by sex, EU, 2014-2024**  
(% of people aged 25-64, EU-LFS)

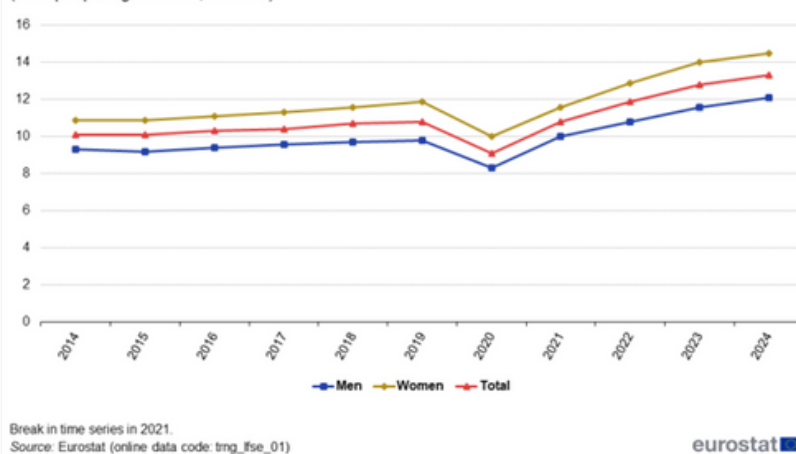


Figure 5: Adult learning (last 4 weeks) by sex, EU, 2014-2024  
(% of people aged 25-64, EU-LFS)  
Source: Eurostat ([trng\\_lfse\\_01](#))

In 2020, 67.4%<sup>[5]</sup> of enterprises employing 10 or more persons in the EU were 'training enterprises', i.e. they provided either continuing vocational training courses or at least one of the other forms of continuing vocational training to their staff. This indicates that employers are increasingly aware of the importance of access to training and the need to develop their employees' skills.

[1] Adopted on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018, the Act of 5 September 2018 'on the freedom to choose one's professional future'. Since then, under Article L. 6323-3 of the Labour Code, employees have been entitled to a personal training account for training purposes. Art. L. 6323-17.-When training courses financed under the personal training account are taken in whole or in part during working hours, the employee shall request authorisation for absence from the employer, who shall notify the employee of their response within the time limits specified by decree. Failure by the employer to respond shall be deemed to constitute acceptance. [LOI n° 2018-771 du 5 septembre 2018 pour la liberté de choisir son avenir professionnel \(1\) - Légifrance](#)

[2] Italian Constitution, Article 4: establishes the right to work and the duty to contribute to the material and moral progress of society — interpreted as including the right to professional growth through training. Article 35: mandates the Republic to "promote and protect work in all its forms and applications" and to "provide for and promote training and professional advancement of workers".

Law 388/2000; Decrees 276/2003 & 81/2015

Recognized as a worker's right and employer's duty via collective agreements. Funded by interprofessional training funds (Fondi interprofessionali).

[3] Adult learning: covers adults' participation in education and training (formal, non-formal and informal learning) and is one of the main data sources for EU lifelong learning statistics. Since 2022, it covers all adults aged 18-69 years, Eurostat

[4] Technology Industries of Finland reports that up to 91% employees at their member companies participate in continuous training every year

[5] Eurostat, [Statistics on continuing vocational training in enterprises](#), 2022



MET industries invest substantially in both formal and informal training for their workforce. They are convinced that employee training is fundamental to improving productivity and competitiveness, provided that such training remains relevant, targeted, and aligned with the needs of enterprises.

It is also important to recognise the significant contribution of informal and non-formal<sup>[1]</sup> training within companies, and the time and financial investment this represents for the companies. Such training often occurs in the context of onboarding new employees or introducing new digital tools. Indeed, 88.5% of workers in Europe participate in non-formal learning—such as workplace courses or on-the-job training without formal accreditation—while 83.6% of this training is job-related, and 87.9%<sup>[2]</sup> of it is sponsored by employers. Workers should therefore receive, as possible, guidance and mentoring by their employer in line with national practices, to help them identify the most appropriate training opportunities.

### The case of France

1

According to a [study published by INSEE](#) (French national institute of statistics) on employees access to training in 2023, published in February 2025, 55% of employees in industry had access to training in 2023, representing 1,650,000 people at the industrial level. The same ratio applies to Metal Industry, representing approximately 880,000 beneficiaries each year.

According to statistics published by the French government ([Appendix to the draft finance bill for 2026](#)), across all sectors, direct spending by companies on vocational training in 2024 amounted to €16.4 billion. OPCO (French joint body responsible for funding and supporting vocational training) expenditure (financed by company contributions) amounted to €12.4 billion in 2024, bringing the total expenditure by companies to €28.8 billion.

According to these figures, estimated expenditure in the metallurgy sector, given its economic weight, was around €3 billion in 2024.

### Project QBlue in Hamburg

2

The project focused on developing future-oriented qualification opportunities for the aviation industry in Hamburg. Over a period of three years (March 2021–March 2024), three organizations collaborated: HCAT+ e.V. as the educational network and coordinator, Hamburg Aviation e.V. as the cluster association, and Hanse-Aerospace e.V. as the industry association.

Working together with educational partners, HR representatives from small and medium-sized enterprises, skilled technical workers, and other stakeholders, the project aimed to identify needs and create tailored training solutions. Through active exchange and networking, specialized expertise was developed that continues to benefit the aviation sector beyond the project's duration.

[1] According to [Cedefop](#), non-formal learning is structured but outside the formal education system (e.g., in-company training), while informal learning is unstructured learning from daily life activities (e.g., work, leisure) and is often unintentional. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-glossary/glossary/apprentissage-informel#:~:text=Acquisition%20of%20knowledge%2C%20know%2Dhow,with:%20non%2Dformal%20learning>.

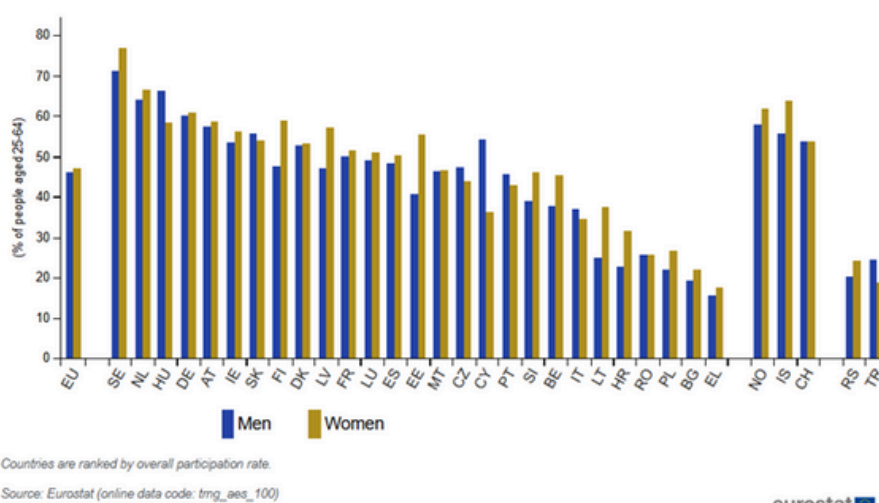
[2] Adult learning statistics – characteristics of education and training, Eurostat 2022 updated 2024 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/SEPDF/cache/44910.pdf>

MET companies consider that training initiatives should be directly related to the worker's assigned duties, current position, or professional retraining needs within the enterprise. Training must fulfil the dual objective of enhancing the worker's competencies while supporting the company's operational and strategic goals, thereby ensuring both individual employability and overall business competitiveness.

One of the concerns encountered by employers in the MET industry is the occasional lack of motivation<sup>[1]</sup> on the part of employees to undertake training or, conversely, to use it as a justification for absence from work. In both cases, **an explicit right to training at the EU level will not solve these problems or remove the barriers to accessing training.**

To illustrate this, one can mention France. This country has introduced a legal right to training (see table below); however, the participation rate of workers in training remains lower than in countries without such a right and where, for the most part, access to training is managed by collective agreements. It is also the case for Italy, where we can observe that the participation rate is relatively low compared to the other EU Member States. This means that the framework for training provided by collective agreements is more effective than a legal right to training.

*Participation rate in education and training by sex, 2022*



**That is why MET industries strongly believe that training should not be approached as a matter of individual right but rather as a question of creating the right environment and conditions for both employers and employees to develop skills effectively.**

[1] More than 4/5 people reported that they didn't want to engage in training. Eurostat Adult Education Survey (2016)

## 2

### The way towards skills development: trusting national systems and social partners

Ensuring the efficiency and responsiveness of EU training systems is not a matter of creating a new right to training. Rather, it concerns the extent to which workers can participate in training that enhances their career, helps them in daily work or adds value to their current roles during working hours. **The focus should therefore be on establishing the appropriate conditions that enable meaningful skills development, rather than on enshrining an abstract right to training.**

This requires a strong partnership between policymakers, industry, and social partners to foster an environment where both employers and employees can engage in training that is relevant, accessible, and aligned with labour market needs. In this context, MET industries put forward a set of recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness of training across the European Union – ensuring it responds to industrial requirements, reinforces national training capacities, and places social dialogue at the core of the system.

#### 1. Ensuring relevant skills through business-oriented training systems

For many years, MET industries have consistently drawn attention to the persistent mismatch between education and training systems and the skills required by the labour market. In 2023 Eurobarometer highlighted that many companies, especially in the EU, report an inability to find candidates with the right skills, with 63%<sup>[1]</sup> of SMEs citing this as a problem. In response, the European Union and its Member States have undertaken various measures and projects to address this skills gap, such as the Year of Skills in 2023 at the EU level. MET industries have also put in place several programmes to address the skills gap:

**MET industries have consistently drawn attention to the persistent mismatch between education and training systems and the skills required by the labour market.**

For example, in Finland, many of the MET companies work in close collaboration with the education providers to ensure that they find skilled workers. Forms of collaboration may include but are not limited to different trainee- and re- or upskilling programmes, planning of learning environments, planning the content of education programs so it suits the company's needs, etc.

[1] Survey highlights skills shortages in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), Eurobarometer, 12 September 2023 [https://wayback.archive-it.org/12090/20250217150459/https://year-of-skills.europa.eu/news/survey-highlights-skills-shortages-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-smes-2023-09-12\\_en](https://wayback.archive-it.org/12090/20250217150459/https://year-of-skills.europa.eu/news/survey-highlights-skills-shortages-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-smes-2023-09-12_en)



In other Member States, such as in France, several schemes have been developed to address the current skills shortage, including:

- **Partnerships with different employment stakeholders**

To address the skills gap, UIMM has developed close partnerships with public authorities, members of the Public Employment Service (Apec, France Travail, Union Nationale des Missions Locales), guidance providers (Onisep), and associations supporting the integration of people with limited employability into the labour market.

- **Support via OPCOs for acquiring digital/green transition skills**

OPCO2i offers diagnostics to help companies in the metalworking industry identify their skills needs in the context of green and digital transitions.

The diagnostic can be funded for companies with fewer than 250 employees.

However, further efforts are needed to bring businesses and training systems closer together to better anticipate the skills needed for future work. This rapprochement should enable adaptation to technological advances as well as to the green and digital transitions. It is crucial that the Member States ensure the quality and relevance of vocational training and its added value in the labour market.

To achieve this, MET industries consider that:

- Training systems must be flexible and responsive, capable of adjusting to the rapid technological changes introduced by enterprises. In some cases, this may require rethinking curricula to shorten training periods and ensure that programmes remain relevant to evolving technological needs.
- Training programmes should therefore be directly linked to the worker's assigned duties, current position, or professional retraining within the enterprise. In such cases, the employer should bear the costs, and the training should take place during working hours. Conversely, training that is not required by the enterprise or unrelated to the employee's tasks should be financed through public funds and conducted outside working hours.
- The warranty that employees successfully complete their training would also increase their value for employers, particularly for SMEs, where access to training remains limited due to organisational constraints, staff shortages, and financial barriers. Ensuring the quality of training and its relevance to the needs of the company will help reduce employers' uncertainty about allowing employees to participate in training.
- The EU should continue to support the adaptation of national education systems for LLL and encourage stronger cooperation between businesses and training providers.

Those requirements are key elements in the debate on the right to training, as they enhance both the effectiveness and fairness of training provisions. The fact that **a bottom-up approach is necessary** in order to ensure that training meets the requirements of the sector does not mean that **the EU has no role to play**.

Thus, EU action should serve to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of Member States' training systems.



## 2. Supporting national systems through EU-level support for skills and training

To ensure that training programmes effectively meet the needs of a sector, it is essential to take the specific characteristics of companies into account: their operating environment and their corporate culture. That is why access to training and its governance must remain the responsibility of Member States. However, given the common challenges facing Europe in terms of demographic decline, brain drain, labour and skills shortages, the European Union has a role to play. It should step up its efforts to remove barriers, especially to compensate for the skills mismatches with the labour market. The EU needs to improve the overall effectiveness of training systems by coordinating targeted actions and supporting workers' and employers' actions.

For example, certain competences, particularly in STEM disciplines, remain in high demand yet short in supply. The EU should therefore continue to promote and strengthen STEM education within national education systems through sustained action at the European level. Employers in the MET sectors have long called for targeted awareness campaigns to attract more women and young people to STEM fields. Despite implementing various initiatives, they have observed that these measures have not fully addressed the issue. For this reason, Ceemet strongly welcomes the European Commission's STEM Education Strategic Plan<sup>[1]</sup>, which aims to foster greater interest and participation in these disciplines and career paths.

Another important action is that the EU continues to promote both vocational education and higher education as equally valuable pathways, rather than viewing them in competition with one another. Effective and well-functioning career guidance systems are also essential to support individuals in choosing training and education aligned with labour market needs. It is crucial that Member States and national education systems provide the foundational skills that future workers will require. Equally important is that these education systems remain closely connected to the needs of businesses.

The EU has also an important role to play in terms of investment to support training systems among the EU. Acknowledging the significant costs borne by companies for training and the increasing difficulty of sustaining such investments in a context of economic uncertainty and structural transformation, targeted and effective support at the European level is essential. To address these challenges, Ceemet recommends that the European Union continue to allocate social funding strategically. Of the €2 trillion foreseen under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034, at least €100 billion from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) should be directed towards social objectives, with a particular focus on training and skills development within broader, integrated programmes. Furthermore, the EU should enhance the precision of its funding priorities and simplify administrative and procedural requirements, thereby ensuring more effective and timely access to financial support for training initiatives. Finally, a minimum of 15% of ESF+ resources should be earmarked for skills development, to foster upskilling and reskilling across sectors and strengthen Europe's industrial competitiveness.

Europe plays a crucial role in supporting Member States in the implementation of effective training systems by promoting the development of skills essential to competitiveness and by investing directly in training structures. The EU should maintain this supranational, coordinating role rather than creating new rights.

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[1] A STEM Education Strategic Plan: skills for competitiveness and innovation, European Commission, 5 March 2025  
<https://education.ec.europa.eu/document/stem-education-strategic-plan-legal-document>

### 3. Strengthening Training Systems through Social Dialogue

The European Union should also emphasise to Member States the importance of allowing social partners to determine the most appropriate training for employees, ensuring that it responds to the needs of both businesses and workers. This approach requires respect for the autonomy of social partners and a firm commitment to upholding and strengthening social dialogue.

As illustrated in Figure 2 above, **access to training is higher in countries where the coverage of collective agreements is high than in those where a statutory right to training exists**, as is the case in Italy and France. Even outside this framework, Finland demonstrates a higher rate of participation in training than France, despite the fact that the social partners there have chosen not to include such a right within their collective agreements.

**Social dialogue has long proven its effectiveness and remains indispensable for identifying and addressing the needs of both employers and employees.** Owing to their close connection with businesses and their in-depth understanding of labour market dynamics, the social partners are best positioned to determine the skills needs of the future.

A significant example within our sector is METapprendo<sup>[1]</sup>, an initiative launched by the Italian social partners in the MET industry. This initiative guarantees each employee at least 24 hours of training during each contractual period. To strengthen this system, the National Collective Bargaining Agreement of 5 February 2021, concluded between Italian employer organisations Federmeccanica, Assistal, and the trade unions Fim, Fiom, and Uilm, introduced a dedicated digital platform providing tailor-made training services to all metalworkers. These services include tools such as blockchain-based training records, planning templates, and online micro-learning modules.

The objective of this initiative is to help companies organise training for all employees, making the process more accessible, flexible, and efficient. It is a dynamic project, beginning with a priority necessity identified in consultation with companies and local associations, and expanding progressively over time. This kind of approach makes it easier for the social partners to design training programmes that are more closely aligned with company needs<sup>[2]</sup>.

In this regard, the European Union should respect the autonomy of the social partners while supporting their efforts. The EU could contribute by issuing recommendations or guidance to facilitate access to training within the context of national or sectoral negotiations, thereby reinforcing the effectiveness of social dialogue in shaping responsive and relevant training systems.

The MET industries recognise the importance of training, which is supported in various ways across EU countries, including through formal or informal rights to training in some cases. Moreover, MET industries face a continuous need to upskill and reskill their workforce.

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[1] MetApprendo <https://metapprendo.it/>

[2] In Finland, TIF member companies do take part in planning many re- or upskilling programs together with VET-organizations for example.



# Conclusion



In conclusion, the priority of European policymakers and social partners should **not be to establish a new right to training, but rather to improve the efficiency and responsiveness of national training systems**. The national systems and especially the collective agreement warranty better access to training for the workers and a better adequation with the companies' requirements. Efforts must focus on making training relevant, accessible, and aligned with the needs of both businesses and workers. Introducing new EU-level legislation risks diluting the effectiveness of training, leading to outcomes that fail to meet their intended purpose.

Training must remain a national competence, as the European Union has no direct legislative authority in this field. Member States are best positioned to design and implement education and training policies or to introduce a right to training that reflects their specific economic structures, labour market realities, and social contexts. The EU's role should therefore be to support and complement national efforts, rather than to harmonise them.

Finally, the Union should place trust in the social partners, who, through their close relationship with the labour market, are best equipped to identify evolving skills needs and develop practical, effective training solutions. Respecting national competences and reinforcing social dialogue are essential to building a modern, competitive, and inclusive European training ecosystem.

# Annexe 1: Overview of national situations on the right to training

Country	Does a right to training exist?	For how long?	Paid or not	On specific conditions	During working Hours
<b>Austria</b>	Partially It plays a minor role in collective agreements and refers to the work council	Up to 12 months	State fund		
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Partially through collective agreement	5 days	Paid by employer	Yes, for specific training, the employee receives a wage: at least 90% of the national minimum wage and should they complete the training, the worker has to take an exam; if they succeed, they get a qualification certificate. Training could be done until 6 months	yes
<b>Croatia</b>	Partially	7 days	Yes, by the employer	Article 54 of the Labour Act states that "the employer is obliged to provide the worker, in accordance with the possibilities and needs of the work, with schooling, education, training and advanced training." The worker is also obliged to attend such training insofar as it corresponds to their abilities and the needs of the work.	yes
<b>Denmark</b>	Yes, in most of collective bargaining	Two weeks/ year	Yes if its relative to the workers job	Fit to the job and tasks	yes

Country	Does a right to training exist?	For how long ?	Paid or not	On specific conditions	During working Hours
<b>Finland</b>	Not in legislation, but collective agreements contain several provisions that define the employer's responsibility for employee learning		Yes, if the training is related to the job and initiated by the employer		
<b>France</b>	Yes, the right to training exists	LLL	Under French national legislation, the right to training has two aspects: · The employer must ensure that employees can adapt to their jobs. · The employer shall ensure that employees maintain their ability to hold a job, particularly in the light of changes in jobs, technologies and organisations. On top of that there is the individual learning account which allows employees to take a training course leading to a qualification/ credential.	No conditions except the agreement of the employer	yes
<b>Germany</b>	No, it's a right to training in collective agreement	5 days	Paid by employer	In the metalworking sector, employees are entitled to 5 days paid educational leave every two years for continuing vocational training.	yes
<b>Italy</b>	Yes				yes
<b>Netherlands</b>	No or restricted in some collective agreement		Vouchers system (like Portugal)	Yes (sustain ability for example 2 days)	Yes
<b>Norway</b>					



Country	Does a right to training exist?	For how long?	Paid or not	On specific conditions	During working Hours
<b>Serbia</b>					
<b>Spain</b>	No- collective agreement	5–20 days per year depending on the training type and agreement.	Employers or Tri-partite fund		yes
<b>Sweden</b>	Not in general. However, extensive study leave rights combined with collective agreement on lifelong learning	In MET, the employees are entitled to study support to undergo training up to 44 study weeks (subject to approval by social partner organisation).	Employees are entitled to study support for 44 weeks paid by a social partner found (founded by employers) and government contribution. The training is offered by the public, vocational training, universities etc.	Trainings that will strengthen the individual's future position on the labour market. They may not be purely recreational training sessions.	no
<b>Switzerland</b>	Yes, in the collective agreements		State aid but less budget since 2024		
<b>Türkiye</b>					
<b>The UK</b>	Right to request	Call for 10 days per year	Yes		Call for right to flexible working hours

## Annexe 2: Examples of training centres directly provided by the employer organisation in Europe

Country	National examples
	<p><b>BELGIUM</b></p> <p>Example: FEB/VBO (Fédération des Entreprises de Belgique)</p> <p>Works with sectoral funds (fonds sectoriels) that run training academies— notably Agoria Academy (for technology and industry) and Constructiv (for construction sector).</p>
	<p><b>DENMARK</b></p> <p>Example: DA (Confederation of Danish Employers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operates employer-led training councils and collaborates on VET schools (e.g., EUC Nordvest).</li> <li>Many industry-specific academies are owned jointly by unions and employer groups. CHEK</li> </ul>
	<p><b>FINLAND</b></p> <p>Example: Elinkeinoelämän oppilaitokset EOL ry</p> <p>Historically in Finland many big Industry companies started their own private vocational education schools (paper, shipyards etc.). Many of these are still in operation today, they are also organized under the association called EOL ry.</p> <p>It is also worth mentioning that the Finnish Tech Industries and its Centennial Foundation are heavily involved in developing higher education and research in Finland by providing funds for research projects etc.</p>
	<p><b>FRANCE</b></p> <p>Example: sectoral federations like UIMM (Union des Industries et Métiers de la Métallurgie)</p> <p>UIMM runs a national network of "Pôles formation UIMM" — more than 130 training centres for industrial and technical jobs.</p>
	<p><b>GERMANY</b></p> <p>Example: Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände (BDA) and DIHK (Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry)</p> <p><b>System:</b> The dual education system is largely employer-driven. Chambers of Commerce (IHKs) operate training academies (Bildungszentren) that provide vocational and technical education aligned with industry needs.</p> <p><b>Example institutions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>oHK Akademie München und Oberbayern</li> <li>HWK (Chambers of Crafts) training centres</li> <li>BDA's partnership with Bertelsmann Stiftung on skills and apprenticeships.</li> </ul>

Country	National examples
	<p><b><u>ITALY</u></b>  Example: Confindustria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through “ITS Academy” (Istituti Tecnici Superiori) and Fondazione ADAPT, employers co-create specialized post-secondary schools.</li> <li>• Regional Confindustria academies (e.g., in Emilia-Romagna or Lombardy) partner with universities for tailored skills programs.</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>SPAIN</u></b>  Example: CEOE (Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Runs CEOE Campus, a corporate academy focusing on leadership, innovation, and upskilling.</li> <li>• Confemetal provides a structured system of training for metal sector workers in Spain, combining: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Employer-funded and subsidized courses</li> <li>2. Mandatory health &amp; safety training</li> <li>3. Dual work-study programs and digital skills</li> <li>4. Recognition of acquired competencies through official certification</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>SWEDEN</u></b>  Example: Svenskt Näringsliv (Confederation of Swedish Enterprise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has its own “Skola &amp; Näringsliv” (School &amp; Business) programs and specialized training foundations (e.g., Teknikcollege Sverige for engineering skills).</li> <li>• Finland</li> </ul> <p>Example: EK (Confederation of Finnish Industries)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners with vocational institutions through EK Education Network; co-runs specialized training academies for digital and industrial skills.</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>SWITZERLAND</u></b>  Example: Economiesuisse and Swiss Employers Confederation (SAV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deeply integrated into the dual apprenticeship system, with employer-run training centres across sectors (banking, precision manufacturing, hospitality).</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>THE NETHERLANDS</u></b>  Example: VNO-NCW / MKB Nederland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with sectoral training bodies (SBB – Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven) that certify and co-run training centres.</li> <li>• Employers directly co-design curricula with vocational schools.</li> </ul>



## Annexe 3: Communication campaigns deployed to address skills gaps

Country	National examples
	<p><b><u>FRANCE</u></b></p> <p><b>French strategic action plan to attract women</b></p> <p>The UIMM has launched several communication campaigns to attract different categories of people to careers in metallurgy. One of these, called “<u>tu as ta place</u>” (you have your place), is aimed specifically at women. UIMM has set itself the ambitious goal of increasing the proportion of women in metallurgy by 10 points in 10 years, from 23% to 33%. In concrete terms, this means hiring 88,000 women each year, or 44% of all new hires.</p> <p>This campaign has six areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better integrating women at the gateway to the industry;</li> <li>• Seeking out women who are looking for work;</li> <li>• Raising awareness of the industry among young people through the education system;</li> <li>• Working on perceptions of the industry;</li> <li>• Supporting companies in their recruitment efforts;</li> <li>• Increasing the number of women in UIMM bodies.</li> </ul> <p><b>French communication campaign “Become an IRON MAN/IRON WOMAN”</b></p> <p>Committed to changing the image of the industry and contributing to its appeal, UIMM launched in 2023 a communication campaign to promote the professions of boilermaker, welder, and maintenance technician. These professions are in high demand and are essential to meeting the challenge of reindustrialisation. This exclusively digital campaign was based on nine key messages that highlight the meaning, usefulness, and pride of working in these professions. It ran until March 2024 with the aim of encouraging people to apply for jobs in industrial companies or to find out more about training opportunities. This campaign targeted young people but also older audiences who wanted to change careers.</p>
	<p><b><u>GERMANY</u></b></p> <p>In Germany, there are various training programs available. Larger companies often operate their own academies to provide advanced training and professional development for their employees. Smaller companies, on the other hand, can access support through regional educational institutions, which offer specific training programs tailored to industry needs – for example in robotics, drone technology, or hydrogen handling.</p> <p>One example of our communication and engagement strategy is the broad implementation of digital learning formats across the M+E industry, including webinars, self-learning tools, and VR-based training. These initiatives are part of a wider investment of approximately €6.5 billion annually, which corresponds to €1,585 per employee. This demonstrates our commitment to lifelong learning and the digital transformation of vocational training. While we do not disclose individual campaign budgets, our industry-wide efforts are embedded in national strategies and supported by strong employer engagement. (Please note: The figures are from 2022/2023)</p>

## Get in touch



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