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The DESIGN-MTS project:  
**Free online training modules for machine tool companies on  
the fundamentals of Corporate Social Responsibility**

Brussels, 23 October 2014 - The project **DESIGN-MTS – Defining Social responsibility Interventions for a Grounded Networking in Machine Tools Sector** was launched in July 2013 and has brought together partners from industry, academia and the research world to develop a multi-stakeholder platform in the field of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability. The project has enabled partners to enhance communication on relevant practices in the sector, to encourage the exchange of best practices and to promote stakeholder dialogue along the value chain.

Over the past year, the project consortium has identified areas of relevance in CSR for the machine tool industry, namely employability, demographic changes, workplace challenges and environmental sustainability. The project has mapped challenges and opportunities in each area, it has assessed the level of awareness and best practices in the sector and has disseminated findings through a series of events as well as the project website. A major objective of the project is to better inform SMEs as regards the fundamental concepts of CSR, international standards, and to help them better prepare to respond to growing requirements of customers. Therefore, online training modules have recently been launched on the project website and offer free-of-charge courses to companies and trade associations.



As societal and regulatory pressure have increased on large customers, such as in transport vehicles industries, they have adopted “codes of conduct” and corporate strategies for CSR. In these strategies, customers also outline their expectations from players in their supply chain in key CSR areas, such as environmental sustainability, labour practices, workplace safety and fair operating practices. Small-sized suppliers of production machines and tools lack sufficient resources and knowledge to understand and assess customer requirements which are often based on international standards such as ISO 26000.

Filip Geerts, CECIMO Director General, states: “*Compliance with customers’ CSR-related requirements has become a matter of competitiveness for machine tool suppliers. It increasingly affects suppliers’ ability to keep their customers and to win new contracts*”. The online training modules are designed to educate SMEs and help them develop their internal capacity to comply with these standards. SMEs will be introduced to fundamental concepts of CSR and implementation methodologies, but also to real-life examples from industry. The DESIGN-MTS project offers thereby a useful tool which contributes helping meet the Europe 2020 strategy’s objective of smart and sustainable growth.

For more information on DESIGN-MTS visit the project website: [www.designmts.eu](http://www.designmts.eu)

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### About DESIGN-MTS

The DESIGN-MTS project was initiated and partly funded by the European Commission (contract 333720) and is led by Università Degli Studi di Macerata in partnership with CSR Europe, CECIMO, Central European Initiative (CEI), Istituto Ricerche Economiche e Sociali (IRES) and the University of Nottingham. It was launched on 1 July 2013. For further information about the project, please contact the project coordinator at the University of Macerata, Benedetta Giovanola at [benedetta@giovanola@unimc.it](mailto:benedetta@giovanola@unimc.it)

### About CECIMO

CECIMO is the European Association of the Machine Tool Industries. We bring together 15 national associations of machine tool builders, which represent approximately 1500 industrial enterprises in Europe\*, over 80% of which are SMEs. CECIMO covers 98% of total Machine Tool production in Europe and about one third worldwide. It accounts for almost 150,000 employees and a turnover of over €23 billion in 2013. More than 80% of CECIMO production is shipped abroad, whereas almost half of it is exported outside Europe\*. [www.cecimo.eu](http://www.cecimo.eu)

\*Europe = EU + EFTA + Turkey

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