



## Roundtable discussion: "Skills4Industry"

European Parliament, Room AIH-1  
Wednesday, 4 December 2019  
11.30 - 12.30



## SUMMARY



Brando Benifei, MEP

On the 4 December, a CECIMO delegation together with other industry experts engaged in a roundtable. The focus of the discussion with EU policymakers was the importance of having a vocational education strategy to make the labour force industry ready. The roundtable was moderated by Stewart Lane, Corporate Manager at Renishaw & Chairman of CECIMO AM Committee.

The event was opened by Filip Geerts, Director General of CECIMO, who argued that the skills gap is increasing and impacting many European industries. In particular, the machine tool and related manufacturing technologies sectors are facing growing difficulties to find workers with the right set of skills.



Jenni Heikka, Finnish Permanent Representation

Representing the EMPL Committee of the European Parliament, Brando Benifei (S&D) said that lack of digital skilled workers is one of the main challenges that Europe faces today. From his perspective, it is essential to create national and regional skill ecosystems in which industry, academia and research could work together to determine skills strategies and develop life-long learning programmes.

The commitment to develop life-long learning programmes was confirmed by the Finnish presidency of the European Council. Jenni Heikka, Senior Specialist at the Permanent Representation of Finland to the EU, stated that the topic has been high on the EU agenda for a long time. During the last six months, Finland has continued to prioritize this topic in order to have it included in a post 2020 skills strategy. Furthermore, she highlighted that at EU level there is still no satisfying progress in research and digital skills.



Ivana Ružman, Croatian Permanent Representation

To Ivana Ružman, Counsellor Permanent Representation of the Republic of Croatia to the EU (upcoming presidency of the EU), it will be crucial to work on reskilling and upskilling strategies. The Croatian presidency will support targeted reforms on skills in coordination with national and regional policymakers. Developing such reforms will take time and must include different stakeholders. Therefore, the presidency decided to organize a

series of activities during the next six months in which they will try to open dialogue on how to fill the skills gap.

According to Alison Crabb, Head of Unit on Skills and Qualifications Unit, DG Employment, the European Commission is working with industry stakeholder to foresee which skills will be relevant in the next ten years.

Stefaan Hermans, Director for Policy Strategy and Evaluation, DG Education And Culture, continued by stressing the importance of having qualified teachers as they are the one to determine the quality of education.

New European programmes will not focus only on education and training, but also transition, looking at social aspects and regional economic imbalances. It will be of the utmost importance that Member States work together on the skills issues creating cross border sectorial qualification.

Finally, the EC representatives concluded that the industry and education centres should be ready to engage in partnership (support each other action's financially) and in development expertise (including cooperation on skills intelligence).

During the roundtable, several of CECIMO delegates took the floor to express their concerns. Barbara Colombo (UCIMU) flagged a quantitative and qualitative problem which companies are facing on the Italian job markets. There are not enough people enrolling on courses and part of the current workforce need to be reskilled. Marcus Burton (MTA) pointed out that by the time policymakers and academia have finished their investigation on all the skills needed by the industry, the job market will have already adapted to the change. Wilfried Schäfer (VDW) concluded that the main problem is the speed for the new learning programme to be delivered to teachers and trainers. They need to get the latest update to educate the new workforce properly.



Alison Crabb, European Commission



Barbara Colombo, UCIMU



Stefaan Hermans, European Commission

