



CECIMO sets out to tackle the skills challenge

Skills were treated as a top priority issue during CECIMO's 2013 General Assemblies in Villasimius and Vienna. Panels and workshops were organized for CECIMO delegates (representatives of machine tool companies who sit at the CECIMO General Assembly) who discussed the skills challenge inside-out with experts from government, academia, training institutes and the EU institutions.

The outcome of the CECIMO General Assemblies' discussions were compiled in two reports: the 'CECIMO Manifesto on Skills in the Machine Tool Industry' which puts forward a set of recommendations addressing actors in the government-academia-industry triangle, and the 'CECIMO Roadmap and Action Plan for Skills' which sets out actions that will be taken by industry led by CECIMO to address common challenges.

The CECIMO Skills Manifesto

The European machine tool industry is a strategic 'enabling' industry which provides production equipment and solutions to other manufacturing sectors. It is a global heavyweight generating one third of the world's machine tool outputs. The strength of the machine tool (MT) industry lies in the density and richness of the resources available in the European industrial eco-system. A strong skills base is a major factor underlying the competitiveness of the sector worldwide.

Nevertheless, the ageing European society and shrinking of its active population put the supply of talent at risk. Moreover, skills requirements in manufacturing industries have considerably increased over the last decade, owing to globalization and technological change. Unfortunately, education and training systems in Europe have proven to be unprepared to respond to this challenge.

The growing gap between skills demanded by industry and those provided in formal education hampers the competitiveness of European manufacturing vis-à-vis new competitors from emerging markets. The narrowing down of the skills pipeline in Europe locks up the innovation potential and future growth. There is an urgent need to conceive comprehensive policy strategies which address these diverse and complex problems.

The CECIMO Skills Roadmap and Action Plan

Raising the manufacturing skills of 21st century cannot be left only to education institutions or industry. National governments, regional authorities, schools, training centres and companies all have a distinct and important role to play. Industry is ready to take its responsibilities and be a part of the 'solution'. To that end, companies and national associations meeting at

CECIMO General Assemblies have drawn up a Skills Roadmap and Action Plan defining the actions the sector will initiate under the leadership of CECIMO. This Action Plan is complementary to a myriad of activities undertaken by CECIMO national associations and their member companies at local level.

The Action Plan in short

- Analysis of the current situation: CECIMO has made an in-depth analysis of the skills challenge during the General Assemblies held in 2013 through panels and workshops with the participation of experts. It also aims to carry out a research study within the framework of a European project under the Erasmus+ programme.
- The implementation of the DESIGN-MTS project: This is a European project dedicated to promoting best practices in corporate social responsibility throughout the value chain of the machine tool industry (see page 34). The project has a strong focus on disseminating best training practices across Europe.
- Awareness raising among EU decision-makers: CECIMO is committed to intensify its activity with policy-makers in Brussels to their increase awareness about the skills challenge in the MT industry and to disseminate the manifesto's policy recommendations.
- Applying for an EU project under the Erasmus+ Programme: CECIMO will evaluate the opportunities under the Sector Skills Alliance funding scheme to carry out a European project which will focus on developing joint curricula and innovative methods for vocational training activities.
- Improving networking opportunities between young professionals: CECIMO will investigate the possibility of establishing meeting platforms where young professionals in the sector can exchange ideas and organize joint activities which can help them prepare for skills-related challenges at the next stages of their career. Improve the links between the industry and young people.
- Establishing a working group for skills within CECIMO: to this expert group will monitor the skill-related actions undertaken by CECIMO members and facilitate the exchange of information between them.