

## **Osnabrück Declaration: VET for industry and industry for VET in a post-COVID recovery**

*An ECEG & Ceemet joint press release*

**Employers of the chemical and tech & industry sector highly depend on innovative and flexible vocational education and training (VET). Today's Osnabrück Declaration on VET provides answers on how to future-proof VET systems across Europe.**

**Brussels, 30 November 2020** –ECEG (European Chemical Employers Group) and Ceemet – European Tech & Industry Employers welcome the *Osnabrück Declaration 2020 on VET* as an enabler of recovery. The transition to digital and green economies requires well-skilled workers that took VET as a promising pathway to first class employment and for whom lifelong learning has become the new normal.

The signatory parties of the Declaration know that an industry wanting to remain the driver for innovation, to stay competitive and to continue to provide quality jobs depends on innovative and flexible initial VET (IVET) as well as continuous VET (CVET). To that end, the Declaration defines four objectives which operationalise the vision laid down in the Council Recommendation on VET for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience:

1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET
2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation
3. Sustainability – a green link in VET
4. European Education and Training Area and international VET

### **Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET**

Ceemet and ECEG highlight that successful national VET systems show that the participation of the industry/employers, is an essential element in the design and delivery of VET courses. The involvement of industry guarantees labour market relevance and contributes to the attractiveness of VET as a first-class training choice. VET can be attractive for everyone, provided that the permeability between different educational pathways is fostered. To this end, ties between VET, higher education and continuous training and vice versa need to be created and promoted.

### **Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation**

Maintaining one's individual employability, especially in the context of the ongoing big transitions, is gaining importance. Lifelong learning has thus to become the new normal, requiring commitment from both employees and employers. *"Businesses know best what skills they need and they are different from one company to another, even in the same sector. The decisive element for successful and sustainable training are the company's needs"*, says Dr Michael Stahl Chair of the Education and Training Committee of Ceemet. The importance and need for continuous work-based training increases accordingly.

### **Sustainability – a green link in VET**

VET providers are key actors in the shift to a climate neutral industry. In order to achieve the sustainability objectives, the targets outlined in the Green Deal need to be reflected in VET programmes across the EU.

*"We need a vision that is shared by all representatives,"* resumes Anni Siltanen, Chair of the ECEG's working group on education, *"all stakeholders involved need to understand how they can contribute to the transition to climate neutrality."*

To maximize the impact, decision makers should consider a joint action such as the recently launched Pact for Skills.

### **European Education and Training Area and international VET**

ECEG and Ceemet are convinced of the value of learning mobility, as mobile (VET) students are more likely to be mobile workers. The effects of skills shortage and demographic trends of an ageing workforce in the EU could be tempered. In addition, mobility of learners contributes to the development of important soft skills (language, intercultural, adaptability) which are essential in a globalised, technologically fast-paced industry. They equally strengthen future employability and personal development of young people.

Hence, the objectives and deliverables defined in the *Osnabrück Declaration on VET* provide a sound basis to make VET resilient to future challenges. Within the post-COVID reality industry is ready to deliver and play its part. We call upon all stakeholders to put the respective plans and actions into place.

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## ABOUT

### [Ceemet](#)

The **Council of European Employers of the Metal, Engineering and Technology-based industries** is the European employers' organisation representing the interests of the metal, engineering and technology-based industries. Through its national member organisations it represents 200 000 companies across Europe. The vast majority of them are SMEs, providing over 35 million jobs of direct and indirect employment.



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### [ECEG](#)

The **European Chemical Employers Group**, ECEG, founded in 2002, is a recognised European Sectoral Social Partner, representing the chemicals, pharmaceuticals, rubber and plastics industries in Europe. Our sector provides approximately 3.3 million direct jobs in more than 94.000 enterprises.



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