



Brussels, 01 July 2020

**The ECEG's Statement on the European Commission's Communication
"European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience"**

The European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG) welcomes the publication of the "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience".

We have four main comments on the proposed Flagship Actions:

1. The European Pact for Skills. The Commission has called for the involvement of public and private actors, including social partners. With this statement, as social partner, we express our readiness to take part in skilling the workforce by engaging both with our social partner and representatives of other sectors¹.
2. We have reservations about the proposal to assess Individual Learning Accounts (ILA) as an innovative approach to skills development. We believe this proposal needs more

¹ See: "Action 1: Pact for Skills", p. 6, "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience", 01 July 2020.

elaboration by the Commission. Specificity, the ECEG would like to see more details on training time and the type of training employees can apply for².

3. A new *Green Skills Path* and an updated *Digital Education Action Plan*. These will enable better identification of the demand for particular skills in the future in view of the EU's policy on green transition. It will also improve digital literacy by supporting *Digital Skills Labs, business education partnerships*³.
4. An online, 'real time' information exchange on skills demand both at regional and sector levels *is a decisive* step towards mapping skills demands and identifying skills gaps⁴.

We appreciate the Commission's ambition to increase the number of VET and Higher Education graduates in STEM by 2025⁵. We also support the objective to "encourage breaking of gender and other discriminatory stereotypes" to avoid training choices based on traditional gender roles⁶.

The ECEG has drawn the attention of European stakeholders to this very problem since 2013 as part of the EU funded project on "Child, Care, Career"⁷.

Anni Siltanen, the Vice-Chair of the ECEG's Working Group on Education & Lifelong Learning said: "*We need education and training more than ever to ensure the economic recovery in Europe after*

² See: "Action 9: Initiative on individual learning accounts", p. 15, "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience", 01 July 2020.

³ See: "Action 6: Skills to support the twin transitions", p. 12, "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience", 01 July 2020.

⁴ See: "Action 2: Strengthening skills intelligence", p. 8, "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience", 01 July 2020.

⁵ See: "Setting ambitious skills objectives", p. 18, "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience", 01 July 2020.

⁶ See: "Action 3: EU support for strategic national upskilling action", p. 9, "European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience", 01 July 2020.

⁷ See the Social Partners' project "Children - Care - Career: Equal Participation of Women in the European Chemical Industry", 2013. More information at: <https://bit.ly/2yYh455>.

the COVID-19 crisis. We will have to look thoroughly for different solutions to respond to the current needs in a sustainable manner rather than concentrate on individual learning solutions. Everyone needs to work together, including, educational institutions, employers and workers to foster efficient investment in skills and competences.”

For more information, please contact:
Emma Argutyan, Director General
+32 (0)4 93 09 32 73 or e.argutyan@eceg.org.

About ECEG

ECEG, the European Chemical Employers Group, 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.