



Brussels, 19 March 2024

Press Release – ECEG- Ceemet- industriAll Europe joint event “STEM strategy: from the EU to the regional levels”

On Tuesday, 19 March the European sectoral social partners in the metal, engineering, chemical, pharmaceutical, plastics, rubber and technology-based industries – industriAll European Trade Union ([industriAll Europe](#)), the European Chemical Employers Group ([ECEG](#)) and the European Tech & Industry Employers ([Ceemet](#)) – held a joint event dedicated to “**STEM strategy: from the EU to the regional levels**”. More than 60 key stakeholders, including representatives from the EU institutions, social partners, business associations, trade unions, were in attendance.

Isabelle Barthès, Deputy General Secretary of industriAll Europe highlighted “*Re-skilling and upskilling chemical and metal workers can no longer wait. The unprecedented scale and pace of transformations in our industries call for immediate action to guarantee job-to-job transitions for all workers, all along industrial supply chains. Should we want to keep up with thriving European industries that deliver quality jobs, skills policies must urgently be stepped up with the full involvement of social partners. They must include ambitious strategies to increase Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics [STEM] learning for all*”.

The first panel discussion underlined the main challenges for the chemical and tech industries in terms of STEM education and careers. The exchange mainly focused on the need for the two sectors to **attract young people** and **women** to pursue STEM studies and to match the STEM demand, with the objective of bridging the gap between education and the world of work. As



emphasised by Ceemet’s Director General, **Delphine Rudelli** “*STEM professionals and workers with a STEM background are crucial for our companies to smoothly shift into a greener and more digitalised economy. It is thus urgent that policy makers at all levels boost the investment in STEM-related studies and disciplines to ensure the success of the twin transition*”.

“Whereas we consider that STEM education should be fostered from an early age, we call on policy makers, the industry and the social partners to continue working together towards developing the adequate awareness raising campaigns to attract women and young people to STEM-related studies and to increase their interest in following these disciplines” added Ceemet’s Director General.

The discussion then moved to the policy level, and speakers of the second panel exchanged views on **what has been done** at the European level and what is **still to be done to support regional and national initiatives**, and to strengthen mutual support. Panellists highlighted the main difficulties in meeting long-term challenges and building integrated approaches with the full range of stakeholders at different levels (regional, national and European).

The event also served as an occasion to present [Ceemet – ECEG – industriAll Europe’s joint recommendations for an EU STEM Strategy](#). The document highlights the **need for a European strategy on STEM**, which requires a clear assessment of the status quo and of future needs, with recommendations necessary to tackle the issue. The paper identifies the roles and responsibilities of all actors, taking national or regional differences into account. It summarises key actions to be carried out by the European Commission, the Member States and the Social Partners for boosting STEM talent development.

In her closing remarks, the Director General of the ECEG, **Emma Argutyan** concluded:



"With a multifaceted strategy encompassing the European Commission, Member States, and social partners, we embark on a journey of innovation and progress. Through comprehensive initiatives such as annual STEM labour market analyses, EU-wide consortia collaborations, and robust vocational education enhancement, we pave the way for a thriving STEM ecosystem. Together, we forge pathways for job transitions, prioritize quality STEM education, and invest in reskilling endeavours. By fostering inclusive participation, promoting collaboration with industry leaders, and leveraging digital platforms for outreach, we hope to inspire the next generation of STEM enthusiasts".

For more information, please contact:
Emma Argutyan, Director General
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.