

PRESS RELEASE

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CONFERENCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGE OF EUROPEAN SHIPYARDS THE SECTOR IS LOOKING FOR 11.000 NEW RECRUITS EVERY YEAR

On 5th June 2008, the social partners in the European shipbuilding and ship repair sector, CESA and the EMF, will organise an HR workshop in Koudekerke, The Netherlands, with the support of the European Commission, to discuss demographic changes and future skills requirements in their industry.

A study on demographic change and anticipated skills requirements in the European Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Industry will provide the background and offer valuable key information for the discussions on the way ahead. The study indicates that over the next five years, 11,000 people are needed every year in the shipbuilding sector over the next five years. The workforce in the sector is characterised by high skill levels: 85% of the workforce has enjoyed higher technical education. A significantly larger share (+25%) compared to the European average, is holding an MSc/BSc degree. The share of unskilled workers is diminishing in the shipyards. The now available data confirm the European Shipbuilding Industry's status as a high-tech industry.

For the first time, empirical workforce data have been aggregated across Europe enabling the Sector Experts to better assess the current skills base and to consider the extent to which an ageing workforce might impact on the competitiveness of the shipbuilding industry. Human resource managers, institutional training experts, union and industry association representatives will come together to exchange experience on good practices in various European yards and reflect on potential solutions for the future.

The social partners in the shipbuilding sector have been in a unique position to facilitate this project ensuring research in close cooperation with the relevant industry and trade union actors across the European in order to implement practical and effective solutions.

The results of the workshop are expected to support ongoing efforts at European, national and company level in terms of anticipating the effects of demographic changes and to develop appropriate instruments in the area of training and lifelong learning to meet the sector's future skills needs. Maintaining a highly-skilled workforce is a key factor to ensuring productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

The workshop is carried out jointly by the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) and the Community of European Shipyard's Associations (CESA) as an initiative of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee of the shipbuilding and ship repair industry.

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