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FUTURE CEMENT SKILLS – RECOMMENDATIONS BY EFBWW AND CEMBUREAU

The EU cement industry is undergoing a significant transformation towards achieving carbon neutrality. This shift will have a profound impact on companies and workers alike, with changes already underway. Over the past two years, EFBWW and CEMBUREAU have worked together intensively on developing the following policy recommendations. These are the result of a joint project and an in-depth study conducted by VDZ (the German Cement Association) across six countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Poland, and Spain), as well as other Member States.

CEMBUREAU and EFBWW are committed to fostering an open dialogue as a cornerstone for a successful and just transition. Meaningful involvement of both social partners in addressing decarbonization, skills, training, occupational health and safety, is essential to building trust and gaining acceptance for these transformative changes. This also means working hand in hand on the attractiveness and innovation of the sector.

To achieve this transition, collaboration among all stakeholders - including social partners, decision-makers, policymakers, training providers, and educational institutions - and their understanding of the challenges the sector is facing are crucial. Collaboration across Europe is essential to ensure the European cement industry and its workforce are equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in this transition and build a sustainable future based on quality jobs.

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For Social Partners

- Join forces to promote the sector's decarbonisation and digitalisation processes to enhance its attractiveness in society.
- Engage collaboratively in dialogue to achieve agreements on training and education, and on occupational and health measures for new technologies
- Promote paritarian training funds.
- Collaborate with training providers, academia, educational institutions, and decision-makers to define new job roles and requirements in the context of Industry 4.0 and beyond.
- Participate jointly in shaping the content and format of training programmes to support the sector's transformation, with beneficial incentives for workers.
- Advocate for lifelong learning, vocational education, and apprenticeship programmes specifically tailored to support the sector's transformation.
- Clearly link education to career development and opportunities within the framework of decarbonisation and digitalisation of the sector.

For Decision-makers / Policymakers

- Support dialogue and the involvement of partners in the transformation of the sector.
- Promote and assist in the development of certification systems that recognise skills gained through informal and on-the-job learning, facilitating cross-border and cross-sector mobility.
- Leverage EU and national funds to support companies in Europe to invest in the transition process of the cement industry, including specific allocations for re-skilling and upskilling, training and education of workers.
- Facilitate access to funding which promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by introducing social conditionalities (e.g. quality jobs, training, social dialogue, OSH, decent working conditions).

- Invest in the development and retention of knowledge, skills, and talents within Europe.
- Establish partnerships between educational institutions and social partners to design training curricula that address future skills needs and job profiles.
- Raise awareness about career opportunities in emerging technologies and digitalisation.

For Training and Education Providers

- Collaborate closely with stakeholders and social partners in the industry to address the sector's needs and align training content, design, and implementation with future technical, environmental, and social demands based on the industry's expertise.
- Integrate occupational health and safety competencies into all curricula.
- Provide training content tailored to employees' specific needs by developing customised learning paths for all skill levels and expanding course topics to address the sector's transformation.
- Expand blended learning formats, where appropriate, by offering both e-learning courses and face-to-face training sessions.
- Increase the availability of courses in multiple languages to effectively overcome language barriers and offer language courses to support a diverse workforce.

In Conclusion

The next step would be to develop a clear roadmap on skills intelligence and establish a dedicated platform for exchange among all relevant stakeholders to support the sector's transformation. Meanwhile, a joint action to improve the attractiveness of the sector would be developed. EFBWW and CEMBUREAU will deepen their cooperation and explore a possible social dialogue.