



**EUEW** european union  
of electrical wholesalers



**EuropeOn**  
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



**GCP EUROPE**  
The voice of Efficient building engineering services



**SolarPower  
Europe**

# Common statement

## Value Chain Dialogue, 2 February 2023, Brussels

On 2 February 2023, representatives of EuropeOn, Eurelectric, European Electrical Wholesalers, European Heat Pump Association, GCP Europe and SolarPower Europe met for a “Value Chain Dialogue” to discuss how our sectors can contribute to the green and digital transition and address the priority challenges to its implementation.

In light of the new momentum initiated by the Green Deal Industrial Plan presented by the Commission on 1 February, we reiterate that clean energy solutions are already available, especially through electrified technologies such as heat pumps and solar panels, with the help of energy management tools and effective maintenance schemes.

Now that the negotiations on the Fit for 55 Package and the REPowerEU initiative are well advanced, the question of their implementation becomes pressing. The recent surge in demand for green solutions has highlighted the challenges linked to product and workforce supply that require urgent action.

A first step is to provide long-term predictability with clear and ambitious energy and climate objectives so that industry can adequately adapt capacity in terms of products and workforce.

Our industries are also taking matters into their own hands and discussions today centred mostly on identifying business drivers to literally “re-power Europe”, such as easing products supply for SMEs, aiming for quality and faster installations, and addressing skills-related challenges. Improved access to product data was discussed as a way for all value chain stakeholders to develop new business models, enhance installers’ expertise to deploy new products, and mitigate supply shortages.

Skills and workers shortages are increasingly felt in all segments of our value chain, from grid operators to manufacturers, from wholesalers to installers. All Value Chain Dialogue participants agree on the pivotal role of installation professionals, responsible for concretely implementing the energy transition everywhere in Europe. They also raise concerns about the lack of large-scale action to resorb shortages in technical workers and green skills.

We welcome the European Year of Skills, which scope and budget remain to be defined. Evidently, a “Year” will not be enough as finding the right professionals for the energy transition requires time and planning. However, this Year of Skills can emphasise the benefits

of such an investment in the future of our economies and society, that can yield green growth and jobs all the while securing climate neutrality.

We are aware that setting the energy transition on the right course will require more than up-skilling the existing workforce and providing ad-hoc short-trainings. It is essential to attract and train new professionals and ensure they are equipped with a versatile skillset that allows them to offer comprehensive solutions to decarbonise and optimise Europe's energy consumption while performing in a safe and expert way.

During the Value Chain Dialogue, a reflection on productivity, as a means to successfully deploy the twin transition, has been started. It focused on the one hand on "work productivity": better planning between trades, streamlining or automating some tasks (e.g. quotes, preparation, logistics, customers' relation), clarifying roles between higher and lower-skilled workers, etc. On the other hand "product efficiency" was discussed: standardisation, interoperability, plug-and-play installation, checklists to make installation and grid connection easier, remote calibration (e.g. related to heat pumps) and maintenance options, etc.

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Pursuant to today's meeting, the participants of the Value Chain Dialogue:

- Call on the European Year of Skills to centre on the labour and skills needed to implement the energy transition, with a focus on technical careers in manufacturing and installation, including in view of improving the attractiveness of related jobs for youth and women. We are at the Commission's disposal to contribute to related initiatives.
- Urge EU negotiators on the Fit for 55 Package (especially on RED/EED/EPBD) to ensure that Member States carry out a periodic gap assessment between available and needed installation professionals, as supported by the Parliament at the 13 July 2022 plenary. Additionally, an estimate of the investment needs to bridge such gaps would help governments to plan ahead.
- Call on the European Commission to develop an agenda of targeted cooperation with EU neighbouring states for skilled labour movement and integration, in bi- or multi-lateral international agreements.
- Commit to investigate together partnerships, including in the form of EU-funded projects, to attract and qualitatively train workers.
- Commit to meet again, possibly with more stakeholders, to exchange insights on mega trends in our respective segments, as a way to prepare for their deployment well in advance, in particular with regard to necessary educational and training reforms; and to explore the topic of productivity in more detail.