

The Union of Skills is a step forward, and the VET Strategy will be essential to tackle energy transition workforce shortages

Brussels, 5 March 2025 – The Union of Skills rightly acknowledges **electrical professionals as being among the 42 occupations facing EU-wide workforce shortages**. Despite comprising over 2.7 million workers across Europe, the electrical contracting sector urgently needs more skilled workers to install and integrate clean technologies critical for the energy transition. Therefore, before focusing on upskilling and reskilling, the **priority must be to address the labour shortages in the sector**.

- We are eagerly looking forward to the release of the VET Strategy. **The Union of Skills rightly highlights the need to make VET education more attractive**, which is fundamental to draw more people into technical careers and address workforce shortages. The VET Strategy should place a strong focus on apprenticeships, which often are a central feature of technical education.
- We welcome the **European Skills Intelligence Observatory as a central authority to streamline skills intelligence**. However, it should be effectively integrated with other initiatives such as the European Fair Transition Observatory (Clean Industrial Deal) or the Net Zero platform (Net Zero Industry Act), to foster sectoral skills intelligence.
- This authority should also oversee the **implementation of skills provisions under the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED)**. Although Member States were required to assess workforce gaps by December 31, 2024, less than half have complied so far. As skills policies fall under Member State competence, their active involvement in assessing workforce gaps is a necessary first step toward effectively addressing shortages.
- Assessing the **expansion of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)** to facilitate government investment in upskilling, reskilling, and workforce recruitment is a crucial step. However, acting on the GBER in Q4 2027, as announced in the Clean Industrial Deal, is too late given the importance of addressing shortages of skilled workers for a clean and competitive Europe.

“The energy transition depends on skilled electrical professionals, yet workforce shortages remain a major challenge. Increasing the attractiveness of VET education is a necessary first step to address the lack of workers in our sector and we hope that the long-awaited VET Strategy will deliver on this promise” said Julie Beaufilet, EuropeOn Secretary General.

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