

Social partners in retail and wholesale join forces in Skills Partnership

EuroCommerce and UNI Europa have launched the [Skills Partnership](#) for retail and wholesale under the European Commission's Pact for Skills initiative. This new partnership lays the foundation to identify skills gaps and anticipate the needs of the sector towards the green and digital transformation.

The initiative was launched today at the EuroCommerce conference 'Embracing transformation & uncertainty'. The Partnership foresees actions aimed at facilitating the cooperation of retailers and wholesalers, trade unions, education and training providers and public authorities at the national, regional and local levels.

Retailers and wholesalers already invest a substantial amount each year. By working together, employers and workers' organisations in the sector are already delivering training programmes that strengthen the sector. This partnership aims to reinforce these efforts to promote a culture of life-long learning and collaboration, in the build up to the 2023 European Year of Skills and beyond.

There is an urgent need for the education system to adapt and equip European youth with skill-sets that will benefit them and the whole European economy. Building skills is a pathway to develop better job opportunities and can play an important role in retaining and attracting workers to the sector. These are some of the important elements that should feed into the transition pathway for the sector currently being worked up by the Commission and focus policymakers on what they can do [to build and develop skills](#).

Retailers and wholesalers need to equip their workforce to operate successfully in the massive transformation in digital and sustainability that the sector is undergoing. [A recent study with McKinsey](#) showed that the sector needed to invest over €600 billion in this transformation, from now to 2030, with up to an additional €35 billion needed for re- and upskilling the 26 million Europeans working directly in the sector.

EuroCommerce Director General Christel commented:

"Our sector has a very good track record in helping its employees to achieve their full potential by developing their skills through vocational education and training and collaboration will deepen this. I am delighted to further our ongoing cooperation on skills and training issues with our social partner UNI Europa and the Commission in establishing this new Partnership and look forward to bring other partners onboard. The challenges of the digital and sustainability transformation need to be matched by investments in skills and talent, to which targeted EU co-financing can make a real contribution."

UNI Europa Regional Secretary Oliver Roethig said:

"Working together is vital to navigate the needs of a changing world. Joint initiatives at local and national level are already providing solutions that deliver for companies, for workers and for the communities that they serve. The need for social partners and key stakeholders to identify and overcome the barriers to accessible and inclusive training opportunities for workers in the sector is clear. We are delighted to strengthen our links at European-level to elevate and expand such positive approaches across the whole of the EU."

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Note to Editor: European Commission announcement on the new Pact for skills [Daily News 29 / 11 / 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

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EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 27 countries and 5 million companies, including leading global players and many small businesses. Over a billion times a day, retailers and wholesalers distribute goods and provide an essential service to millions of business and individual customers. The sector generates 1 in 7 jobs, offering a varied career to 26 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. EuroCommerce is the recognised European social partner for the retail and wholesale sector.

UNI Europa is the voice of 7 million services workers coming together from 272 national trade unions in 50 countries in sectors such as commerce and wholesale that constitute the backbone of economic and social life in Europe.