

PRESS RELEASE
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Social Dialogue: European Sectoral Skills Council addresses skills mismatch in commerce

EuroCommerce and UNI Europa today launched [the report of the European Sectoral Skills Council \(ESSC\) Commerce](#), at a conference in Brussels that concluded a year of activities.

The report documents the profile of typical jobs in retail and wholesale, the methodologies that enable forecasting skill needs, the skills needs in current professions in retail and wholesale and emerging professions as a result of digitalisation and internationalisation of retail and wholesale.

The objective of the joint project, which was funded by the European Commission, was to address a wide range of issues related to skills anticipation and labour shortages in the commerce sector.

The commerce sector is one of the first to have established a Sector Skills Council at the EU level. This ESSC initiative has improved networking between the national skills councils.

UNI Europa Regional Secretary Oliver Roethig said, *"The ESSC has enabled us to map which professions are becoming obsolete and which are growing. With this information, we can help workers to adapt to new requirements and technological developments while giving them the opportunity to update their skills, access better career paths and secure sustainable jobs ."*

EuroCommerce Director-General Christian Verschueren said, *"The retail and wholesale sector is undergoing significant change. With the economy going digital, so does shopping. Habits and expectations of consumers change dramatically. The same is true for the B2B trade and their customers. The sector and the education systems need to (re-)train people to ensure that companies have the skills for commerce in the 21st century."*

Through the ESSC, the social partners brought together representatives of national bodies to share knowledge about the evolution of companies and worker's needs, the evolution of skills and jobs, the assessment of practices, tools and methodologies of anticipation.

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EuroCommerce and the commerce sector

EuroCommerce represents the retail, wholesale and international trade sectors in Europe. Its membership includes commerce federations and companies in 31 European countries.

Commerce plays a unique role in the European economy, acting as the link between manufacturers and the nearly 500 million consumers across Europe over a billion times a day. It is a dynamic and labour-intensive sector, generating 11% of the EU's GDP. One company out of three in Europe is active in the commerce sector. Over 99% of the 5.5 million companies in commerce are small and medium-sized enterprises. It also includes some of Europe's most successful companies. The sector is a major source of employment creation: 29 million Europeans work in commerce, which is one of the few remaining job-creating activities in Europe. It also supports millions of dependent jobs throughout the supply chain from small local suppliers to international businesses.