

Industry 5.0 Community of Practice Plenary Session, Brussels, 16 October 2024

Summary Report

The Industry 5.0 Community of Practice (CoP 5.0) Plenary Session convened in Brussels on October 16, bringing together over 100 stakeholders from Europe's innovation ecosystem – CoP 5.0 Members - to discuss the role and impact of the Industry 5.0 framework in transforming European industries and economy. The full-day event included a high-level panel on the framework's potential to strengthen EU sustainable competitiveness, followed by collaborative workshops aimed at shaping CoP 5.0's priorities for 2025.

The session opened with an address by Mr. Marc Lemaître, Director General at the European Commission's DG RTD, who highlighted the growing recognition of Industry 5.0 at EU, national, and regional levels. As examples, he cited recently endorsed European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) own initiative opinion on Industry 5.0 and recently published IndustriAll position paper on the topic, both emphasizing Industry 5.0's human-centric approach, which prioritizes workers at the heart of industrial transformation. This vision reflects an evolving perspective on the use of emerging technologies, emphasising a focus on human impact and value.

Mr. Lemaître noted the urgent need for a human-centric approach in responding to the challenges faced by European industries, such as an aging population and a competitive talent market. Accelerating skills development and adaptability within the workforce is a crucial component of Industry 5.0 especially given that approximately 25% of EU companies face difficulties in finding workers with the right skills, as highlighted by the recently published Report on future of EU competitiveness from former ECB President Mario Draghi. Industry 5.0 could serve as a powerful catalyst to bridge Europe's skills gap and respond to labour shortages faced by EU industries.

The morning's high-level panel on the Role of Industry 5.0 in enhancing sustainable competitiveness of European industries featured prominent high-level speakers including:

Ms. Lina Gálvez, Member of the European Parliament

Mr. Jean-Pascal Riss, Vice-President for Sustainability and Strategic Partnerships, Schneider Electric

Ms. Judith Ay, Policy Director, European Round Table for Industry

Mr. Andrea Renda, Research Director, CEPS

Mr. Guido Nelissen, Co-rapporteur for EESC's Industry 5.0 opinion

The high-level panel underscored the critical role of Industry 5.0 in addressing challenges stemming from green and digital transitions, and stressed that, in order for Industry 5.0 to become the driving force for competitiveness that it really represents, it needs a shared commitment across public and private players. They advocated for a comprehensive, human-centric approach that goes beyond technological development, aiming to mitigate skills gaps that pose significant obstacles for EU industries, particularly SMEs and startups.

The high-level panellists emphasized the need for substantial public and private investment to realize Industry 5.0's transformative potential, including through integrating Industry 5.0 principles in the funding conditionalities. They underscored the need for a wider integration of Industry 5.0 principles across entire value chains and underlined the key enablers of this

process including adopting the learning organisation model of continuous improvement and innovation to enhance adaptability to the new complex industrial environments, expanding workforce empowerment, data accessibility, upskilling, and creating training initiatives to foster readiness for Industry 5.0's demands.

Panellists further stressed that adopting the Industry 5.0 paradigm shift is an opportunity for industries to take on a much more proactive, value-driven role in industrial transformation, towards maintaining industrial competitiveness and leadership, as well as ramping up environmental and societal impact. They recommended embedding Industry 5.0 into upcoming EU flagship initiatives, such as the new industrial strategy and EU competitiveness plan. In addition, the implementation of Industry 5.0 needs a territorial focus, in order to enable the local development. It is also important to continue working on creating incentives for markets and investors to reward I5.0 business models.

The afternoon workshops offered CoP 5.0 members a collaborative platform to discuss and outline actions for 2025. Members reviewed CoP 5.0's priorities as presented in the final report, exploring initiatives for scale-up and new ideas for implementation.

In addition to considering options for implementing the future priorities of CoP 5.0 as outlined in the CoP 5.0 pilot final report—including developing an Industry 5.0 business case, establishing an EU-level CoP 5.0 platform, conceptualizing HUBS5.0, and creating a monitoring framework for Industry 5.0—Members proposed several pledges to further drive Industry 5.0 across Europe. These include mobilizing existing networks such as SMEs, universities, and industrial clusters to collect and share success stories illustrating the short-, mid-, and long-term impacts of Industry 5.0; hosting a series of national and regional “Industry 5.0 info days” to raise awareness and engagement with the framework; establishing a network of Industry 5.0 “lighthouses” (demonstrators) across Europe to showcase successful implementations; or co-developing guidelines to support streamlined adoption and implementation of Industry 5.0.

The plenary session's programme also included the presentation of the recently published ERA Industrial Technologies Roadmap on Human-Centric Research and Innovation and initial results from testing and validating a Prototype Industry 5.0 Learning and Assessment Tool (one of the CoP 5.0 pilot first deliverables).

Looking forward, CoP 5.0 aims to develop a comprehensive work plan that will establish actionable, Industry 5.0-driven initiatives to be co-implemented by the CoP 5.0 Members in course of 2025. Through collaborative efforts, CoP 5.0 envisions Industry 5.0 as an important framework to drive sustainable competitiveness and resilience in European industries.