

We're celebrating our birthday!



Dear reader,

Welcome to this brand-new issue of the ChemSkills' newsletter, which regularly updates you on the latest developments of the project.

This month, the ChemSkills' project turns one year old! In September 2023, the consortium met for the first time and held its kick-off meeting in Brussels. This month, on its first anniversary, we had the great pleasure of reconvening in Serbia at the University of Novi Sad. It was a great opportunity to collaborate once more on the roadmap to address and meet the skills needs of the chemical industry. Over the past year, we have witnessed some of our ambitious plans steadily come to life.

This three-day meeting allowed project partners to align their visions, share methodologies and exchange best practices. Without any doubt, the highlight of the event was the public conference, featuring valuable contributions from Serbian companies, as well as from different EU Member States' perspectives. Project partners also shared insights into the progress already achieved in the framework of the ChemSkills' initiative.



Heartfelt thanks to the University of Novi Sad for the excellent organisation and the warm welcome, as well as to all participants – both in-person and online – for their interest in and support of our project.

Enjoy the reading and stay tuned for more updates and exciting developments of this journey towards a greener and more digital future for the chemical industry!

The ChemSkills' project management team
Anni, Emma, Eleonora, Chiara





The ChemSkills Public Conference

The ChemSkills Public Conference, held at the University of Novi Sad, brought together experts from 33 European organisations to address the pressing skills gap in the chemical industry. The event focused on the growing need for green and digital skills, which are crucial for the future of the sector.

The chemical industry, which employs over 1.2 million people across Europe, is undergoing rapid changes due to sustainability demands and digital transformation. The ChemSkills project aims to bridge this skills gap by preparing workers for these shifts. In its first year, the project has achieved key milestones, including launching a website, newsletters, promotional materials, and conducting surveys to identify the most needed skills.

Green and digital skills were identified as essential for the industry's future. Companies are increasingly investing in training for areas such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and green technologies. Vocational education and lifelong learning were also highlighted as important tools for upskilling the current workforce to meet new industry demands.

The conference also addressed the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly in Serbia. Many SMEs are struggling to meet EU standards, but successful partnerships with educational institutions are helping these businesses adapt to new technologies and remain competitive. Looking ahead, the ChemSkills project will continue to focus on developing training materials and promoting stronger collaboration between industry and education. With an emphasis on STEM education, gender diversity, and reskilling, the project aims to ensure that Europe's chemical workforce is well-equipped to meet future challenges.

In conclusion, the ChemSkills Public Conference reinforced the need for close cooperation between industry, education, and policymakers to address the skills gap in the chemical industry. By working together, these stakeholders can prepare a skilled workforce that is ready for a sustainable and competitive future. A recording of the conference can be viewed at the following link.

**Watch the recording of
the ChemSkills Public Conference**

[Click here](#)



German Rubber Conference

1st - 4th
July 2024

On 1-4 July 2024, The German Rubber Conference took place with an associated international trade fair.

Experts and companies from all over the world came together and presented their latest developments and products. The Elastomer Technology and Engineering (ETE) group from the University of Twente, The Netherlands, participated at this conference as well and presented at their booth also the ChemSkills project. The conference was a great platform to spread the news about the ChemSkills project to the rubber community.

1st Year Recap



The ChemSkills project, co-funded by the European Union, aims to address the critical skills gaps in the chemical industry, preparing the sector for a future shaped by sustainability and digitalisation. Over the past year, the project has focused on identifying key skill shortages and laying the groundwork for future development across various sub-sectors, including plastics, consumer chemicals, fertilisers, rubber, pharmaceuticals, and petrochemicals.



Project management ensured seamless coordination in the first year by establishing a leadership structure and organising key meetings. A Sustainability and Cooperation Plan was developed to guide collaboration and communication among partners, creating a solid foundation for the project's progress. Dissemination efforts were crucial in building visibility, and a strong online presence was established through social media, newsletters, and the project website. This outreach engaged over 260 followers on platforms like LinkedIn and reached more than 5000 individuals through conferences, presentations, and newsletters. The project website continues to attract growing interest and provides stakeholders with regular updates.

Sectoral skills intelligence has been a priority, with a comprehensive methodology developed to assess green and digital skills needs across the chemical industry. A large-scale survey was launched to gather data on current skills and future trends, informing the development of training programmes. In parallel, existing training offers were identified, with 32 programmes found, particularly in the pharmaceutical sector. These will serve as a foundation for creating new training materials, which will be available through a centralised Skills Hub, providing accessible upskilling and reskilling opportunities.

Each work package dedicated to a specific sub-sector made significant progress in identifying skills gaps and addressing future needs. For example, the plastics work package focused on sustainability and circular economy practices, conducting surveys and workshops to define new educational pathways. Similarly, the fertilizers and rubber work packages concentrated on skills related to environmental sustainability and digital transformation, gathering data through surveys and industry workshops. In the pharmaceutical sector, regulatory challenges were highlighted, with workshops conducted to explore current and future skills needs. The petrochemical work package gathered detailed survey data and provided strategic recommendations to inform skills policies and reskilling programmes.

In conclusion, the first year of the ChemSkills project has been highly productive, establishing a solid foundation for addressing the evolving skills needs of the chemical industry. Through collaborative efforts, detailed research, and active stakeholder engagement, the project has set the stage for the development of targeted training programmes. These efforts ensure that the industry is equipped to face future challenges related to sustainability and digitalisation, making ChemSkills a critical initiative in shaping the future of Europe's chemical workforce. A more detailed report on our first year will be published in the coming weeks.

stay tuned for more news...



Co-funded by
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