SoDi

Supporting the Implementation of the European Industrial Deal with Strengthened Social Dialogue in European Metal Sector.

7TH NEWSLETTER

SODI analyzes the impact of policies for a sustainable transformation of the European metal sector

The SODI project (Supporting the Implementation of the European Industrial Deal with Strengthened Social Dialogue in the European Metal Sector) continues to make progress with a new analysis focused on a key question: how to ensure that policies aimed at transforming European industry have positive effects for both companies and workers.
The new document prepared within the framework of the project is a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on SODI's proposals to promote sustainable employment in the metalworking sector in the context of the green and digital transitions.
The goal is to analyze in advance the potential economic, social, and environmental consequences of these proposals and to verify that the proposed measures are effective, proportionate, and enforceable

Why is it important to assess the impact of new policies?

The metal sector holds a strategic position in the European economy. Its products and technologies are essential for industries such as automotive, construction, defense, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing.
At the same time, the sector is undergoing a profound transformation. Decarbonization, digitalization, artificial intelligence, automation, high energy costs, and international competition are changing production processes, company needs, and the professional profiles of workers.
In this context, policy and regulatory decisions can have significant consequences. A new measure can drive innovation and create opportunities, but it can also lead to additional costs or adaptation challenges, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.
Regulatory Impact Assessment makes it possible to anticipate these effects before implementing new measures and to strike a balance between the various objectives.



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A transition that must take people into account

One of the main messages of the analysis is that the green and digital transformation cannot be approached solely from a technological or economic perspective.
The transition must also take into account employment, professional skills, and working conditions.
The SODI project has identified that, although social dialogue structures exist in the countries analyzed, in many cases the participation of social partners remains reactive or comes too late, after important decisions have already been made.
Therefore, the document highlights the need to strengthen the participation of workers, unions, and business organizations from the earliest stages of the transformation processes.

Five objectives to support the change

The analysis sets out five main objectives for future policies:

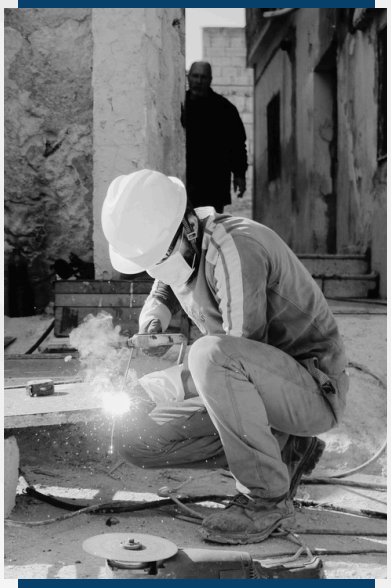
•Integrate job quality and social dialogue into green and digital transition policies.
•Improve training, reskilling, and lifelong learning.
•Promote quality jobs and good working conditions.
•Strengthen strategic social dialogue at the European, national, sectoral, and company levels.
•Ensure fair and accessible financing, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.
These objectives aim to ensure that the modernization of European industry is not limited to incorporating new technologies, but also prepares people and companies for the changes to come.



Competitiveness and employment: two goals that must advance together

The assessment carried out by SODI indicates that the proposed measures can generate positive economic effects in the medium and long term.
Investment in new technologies, training, digitalization, energy efficiency, and the circular economy can improve productivity and create new industrial opportunities.
At the same time, the analysis acknowledges that the transformation will come at a cost. Companies will have to make significant investments and bear certain administrative and adaptation costs. The document therefore highlights the importance of European funding instruments and measures that simplify companies' access to these resources, especially for SMEs.
The conclusion is very clear: industrial competitiveness and job quality should not be seen as conflicting goals. A strong European industry needs skilled workers, companies capable of investing, and conditions that allow it to face the transformation with confidence and planning.

More training and new skills



The green and digital transition is creating new professional needs. The sector will increasingly need workers trained in areas such as robotics, artificial intelligence, digital maintenance, hydrogen-based technologies, environmental management, data analysis, and cybersecurity.
Therefore, training and reskilling are central to SODI's proposals. The goal is not only to create new job profiles, but also to offer training opportunities to workers who may be affected by automation, digitalization, or industrial transformation.
The document pays special attention to groups that may be in a more vulnerable situation, such as older workers, people with lower qualifications, women, migrants, and workers at small and medium-sized companies.

A greener industry that is better prepared for the future

From an environmental standpoint, the measures analyzed can help accelerate the reduction of emissions and promote a more resource-efficient industry.
The commitment to renewable energy, hydrogen, electrification, energy efficiency, recycling, and circular production models can reduce the environmental impact of industry while, at the same time, strengthening supply security and Europe's strategic autonomy.
The circular economy plays a particularly important role, as increased metal recycling reduces the consumption of raw materials and energy and can create new industrial and employment opportunities.

Social dialogue, a key element

One of the most important conclusions of the assessment is that the success of these policies will largely depend on the ability of the various stakeholders to work together.
Companies, unions, public authorities, and other stakeholders must be involved in designing and monitoring the measures. The document believes that the European Social Dialogue Committee for the Metal Sector should play a key role as a forum for ongoing cooperation and consultation.
The early involvement of social partners can help identify problems before they arise, improve the implementation of measures, and facilitate a more balanced transition.

Toward more effective and future-proof regulation

SODI's analysis concludes that the proposed framework is a more comprehensive alternative than maintaining the status quo or merely establishing voluntary guidelines.
For it to work, it will be necessary to move forward gradually, simplify procedures where possible, facilitate access to funding, and strengthen the capacity of business and trade union organizations.
It will also be essential to continuously monitor the results. The document proposes using economic, environmental, and social indicators to check whether the measures are achieving their objectives and to correct them when necessary.

An industrial transformation with a future

The Regulatory Impact Assessment carried out within the framework of SODI reinforces a key idea of the project: the transformation of European industry must be competitive, sustainable, and socially fair at the same time.

The future of the metallurgical sector will depend on its ability to innovate, reduce emissions, and adapt to new technologies, but also on its ability to maintain quality jobs, train its workers, and ensure that those involved in the transformation have a say in decisions.

With this new analysis, SODI continues to provide tools and proposals to ensure that the green and digital transition of the European metallurgical sector is not only a technological transformation, but also an opportunity to build a stronger, more resilient, and future-ready industry.

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