
Brussels Declaration on Engineering Talent for a Stronger Europe

Engineers Shaping Europe's Future – The Power of Four

Brussels, 21 May 2026

Preamble

Industry, research and innovation are the cornerstones of Europe's prosperity, technological leadership and cohesion. Yet without sufficient engineering talent — well-trained, diverse, mobile and valued — Europe will fall short of its green and digital transitions, its reindustrialisation ambitions and its technological sovereignty. The engineering representative institutions of the European regions, and in particular those of Auvergne–Rhône-Alpes, Baden–Württemberg, Catalonia and Lombardy, have long worked together to strengthen competitiveness, innovation and shared prosperity. Today we reaffirm a fundamental truth: talent is policy. We must act in concert — regions, Member States and the European Union — to expand, not merely redistribute, Europe's engineering talent base.

Six Commitments for Engineering Talent

- 1. Place engineering talent at the heart of Europe's agenda.** Recognise engineering talent as a strategic asset essential to sustain Europe's research, innovation and industrial leadership capacities, with measurable objectives and transparent monitoring at both EU and regional level, and align it with Europe's critical technology priorities — semiconductors, artificial intelligence, clean energy, defence and advanced materials. Ensure that strategic sectors are never left talent-constrained at moments of geopolitical pressure.
- 2. Build a genuine single market for skills and mobility.** Advance mobility, mutual recognition of qualifications and micro-credentials, reduction of administrative burdens, VET–university pathways and fast-track routes for highly skilled non-EU talent — whilst avoiding zero-sum competition between regions.
- 3. Ensure excellence in engineering education and embed industry structurally.** Guarantee quality across the full learning pathway, from early-stage STEM through to doctoral level, with particular protection for high-level specialisation. Scale dual education, quality paid internships and co-designed curricula with industry partners; expand living labs and university–industry chair networks across the four regions.

4. **Attract, retain and diversify talent.** Offer competitive packages encompassing research opportunities, career pathways, targeted fiscal measures, housing support and family-friendly policies; develop diaspora return schemes and fast-track mechanisms for critical profiles. Set clear targets to increase the participation of women and under-represented groups, supported by mentoring, visible role models and safe, flexible working environments.
5. **Scale lifelong learning and build skills intelligence.** Deploy micro-credentials and mass re- and up-skilling initiatives in AI, cybersecurity, power electronics, advanced manufacturing and sustainability. Establish an EU–regional observatory to anticipate talent needs, steer training supply and align investments using comparable, reliable indicators.
6. **Establish EU–regional governance and dedicated financing.** Conclude a Talent Compact with clearly defined roles — regions leading proximity action, the EU providing enabling frameworks and instruments — aligned funding streams and annual public reporting on progress.

Final Call

Without talent there is no industry; without industry, no shared prosperity — nor European technological leadership. Today, in Brussels, we commit to acting together so that Europe expands and strengthens its engineering talent base, and so that our regions become engines of talent, research, innovation and industrial transformation for our common future.

Signatories

Auvergne–Rhône-Alpes • Baden–Württemberg • Catalonia • Lombardy

IESF
Auvergne–Rhône-Alpes

Ingenieurkammer
Baden–Württemberg

Col·legi d'Enginyers Industrials
Catalunya

Ordine degli Ingegneri
della Provincia di Milano
Lombardia