

PRESS RELEASE

COMPLEMENTS launches Cross-Sectoral Working Group to advance skills cooperation for Security & Defence

28 September 2026 — The COMPLEMENTS project has established its **Cross-Sectoral Working Group**, an open European stakeholder forum bringing together organisations and professionals from across the aerospace, automotive and digital ecosystems to contribute to the development of skills solutions for Europe's Security & Defence ecosystem.

The Working Group provides a structured platform for stakeholders from **industry, education and training, research and innovation, public authorities, social partners and sector associations** to exchange expertise, share evidence and good practices, validate methodologies and contribute to cross-sectoral skills strategies and policy recommendations.

First meeting connects a diverse European community

The Working Group held its first meeting on **24 September 2026**, bringing together approximately **40 participants** from organisations across Europe.

The participants represented a broad range of sectors and stakeholder communities, including aerospace and space, automotive and mobility, digital technologies, research and innovation, higher and vocational education, public authorities, sector organisations and skills and workforce development. Organisations from countries including Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain were represented at the meeting.

The meeting began with a tour de table, giving participants an opportunity to introduce themselves and highlight their main interests in the Working Group. An introduction to the three ecosystems addressed by COMPLEMENTS followed, with presentations on the **aerospace sector by Milva Carbonaro (GISIG)**, the **automotive sector by Jakub Stofa (Automotive Skills Alliance)**, and the **digital sector by Filippo Guido (Digital SME)**.

The meeting then focused on the objectives and added value of connecting sectors, the proposed format for collaboration and governance of the Working Group, as well as COMPLEMENTS' current activities and next steps.

Connecting ecosystems to address shared skills challenges

Technological change and the increasing interdependence of industrial ecosystems are creating skills challenges that cannot always be addressed within individual sectors. The COMPLEMENTS Working Group is designed to facilitate dialogue between sectors and identify common challenges, transferable skills and opportunities for cooperation.

Its work will focus on areas including:

- **Policy recommendations** for cross-sectoral skills development;

- **Skills intelligence methodologies** and their alignment with relevant European initiatives and the Skills Observatory;
- Analysis of **skills shortages, gaps and labour-market mismatches**;
- Development and validation of **cross-sectoral occupational profiles**;
- Identification of **emerging technologies and their implications for the workforce**;
- Peer review of **training materials, curricula and educational resources**; and
- Identification of opportunities for **cross-ecosystem cooperation**.

Members will contribute through quarterly meetings, consultations and collaborative activities, sharing their expertise and evidence and providing feedback on COMPLEMENTS methodologies and outputs.

Working Group to contribute to Strategic Skills Roadmap

The Working Group will play a direct role in the development of **D2.1 – Strategic Skills Roadmap for Complementary Sectors in Security and Defence**, due in February 2027.

The roadmap will provide a comprehensive perspective on skills development across the aerospace, automotive and digital ecosystems and will include **policy recommendations on cross-sectoral cooperation in skills development**. Contributions from Working Group members will help inform the project's skills intelligence, validate its approaches and strengthen the relevance of its recommendations.

The Working Group will also provide a continuing forum for identifying emerging skills needs, exchanging relevant developments and exploring opportunities for collaboration between sectors.

An open forum for European stakeholders

Participation in the COMPLEMENTS Cross-Sectoral Working Group is voluntary and open to organisations and professionals with an interest in skills development across the aerospace, automotive and digital ecosystems.

Members are expected to participate primarily through quarterly online meetings, occasional consultations and collaboration through the project's online member area. The Group's activities will evolve alongside the COMPLEMENTS project, providing stakeholders with opportunities to contribute to its analysis, outputs and recommendations.

The first meeting marked an important step towards establishing a sustained dialogue between complementary industrial ecosystems and the wider skills community. By bringing these perspectives together, COMPLEMENTS aims to support more coordinated approaches to skills development and contribute to the workforce capabilities needed for Europe's Security & Defence ecosystem.

COMPLEMENTS – *Cross-sectoral Skills Strategy for Security and Defence* – is an Erasmus+ project bringing together complementary industrial ecosystems to develop a forward-looking approach to skills development for Security & Defence. The project focuses on cooperation between the aerospace, automotive and digital ecosystems and aims to strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration, skills intelligence, training approaches and policy recommendations.

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