

European Crafts Conference 2025



Supported by:





European Crafts Conference

12-13 March 2025 in Munich

Concept

The European Crafts Conference is organised jointly with the European crafts organisations from various EU Member States (Germany, France, Italy, Denmark, Poland, Greece, Austria, Luxembourg, with the support of SMEunited and the EEN). The conference is supposed to become a reoccurring event, taking place every 2-3 years in different EU Member States.

Together with entrepreneurs from all over Europe, we will discuss a vision for the future of the skilled crafts sector with politicians and EU officials from Brussels, put forward political demands for better support for businesses and highlight the importance of the skilled crafts sector for the transition to a sustainable and competitive economy. We intend to strengthen the visibility of skilled crafts across Europe.

The event 2025

The European Crafts Conference will take place on 12-13 March 2025 in the framework of the International Crafts Fair (IHM) in Munich. The conference will be held in English and moderated by German journalist and author Detlef Fechtner.

The Opening Ceremony will take stock of the challenges the skilled crafts companies face in the context of the transformation of the EU economy and discuss the specific role that these companies are playing when it comes to implementation. It will highlight what the companies within the skilled crafts sector bring to Europe, how they help achieve policy targets defined at EU level and why they are crucial for the European economy and society as such.

Three consecutive moderated panels will enable a focused discussion between EU decision makers, legislators, craft organizations and entrepreneurs on current trends in the skilled crafts sector. The panel discussions should allow for interactive audience participation and will cover relevant policy topics. A closing event will tie the different aspects together and give an outlook of the way forward.



Munich, 12–13 March 2025

Wednesday, 12 March 2025

14:00

Opening ceremony

Introduction by Jörg Dittrich, President of ZDH

Keynote Speech: Enrico Letta, former Prime Minister of Italy

Panel discussion between:

Hubert Gambs, Deputy Director-General at European Commission (DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs)

Marco Granelli, President of Confartigianato Imprese

Véronique Willems, Secretary-General of SMEunited

15:00

Panel: Shortage of skilled workers

Speech by Prof. Dr. Detlef Buschfeld, University of Cologne, Germany

Video message featuring Josef Herk, CEO of Herk GmbH (automotive retail business)

Panel discussion between:

Prof. Dr. Detlef Buschfeld, University of Cologne, Germany

Joël Fourny, President of CMA France

Manuela Geleng, Director Jobs and Skills at European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion)

Alexander Rauner, Expert for education, WKÖ

16:00

Panel: Competitiveness and innovation

Speech by Lex Delles, Minister for the economy, SMEs, energy and tourism, Luxembourg

Video message featuring Paul Bisenius, CEO of Menuiserie Fellens

Panel discussion between:

Marie-Hélène Pradines, Head of Unit at European Commission (DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs)

Lex Delles, Minister for the economy, SMEs, energy and tourism, Luxembourg

Paul Bisenius, CEO of Menuiserie Fellens

17:00

Panel: Sustainability

Video message featuring Luca Crosetto, CEO in production, trade and repair of agricultural machinery and Marianna Panebarco, animation producer

Panel discussion between:

Miriam Koreen, Senior Counsellor, OECD

Andreas Brieger, Director at SMEunited

Chiara di Mambro, Director of Strategy Italy and Europe, ECCO

Thursday, 13 March 2025

09:00 **Closing Session**

Discussing the future of crafts with Petri Salminen, President of SMEUnited, and Dario Costantini, President of CNA

Views from the audience with Jesper Beinov (Director at SMVdanmark), Susanne Haus (President of Handwerkskammer Frankfurt-Rhein-Main) and Tom Oberweis (President of CDM)

Closing speech by Georgios Kavvathas, President of GSEVEE

10:30 **Press Session**