Hydrogen (H2) – A Future Topic of Vocational Education and Training for Excellent and Sustainable Development (ESD)

3rd World Excellence Network Conference on ESD at BBS I Uelzen, Germany

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Honorable Members of Parliament and Patron of Ex-N-BBNE, Ms. Lena Düpont,

Mr. Olaf Lies, Minister President of Lower Saxony,

Dr. Björn Hoppenstedt, First District Administrator of the Uelzen District,

Mayor Jürgen Markwardt,

Dear Mr. Jörg Riemer, Federal Chair, BvLB (Federal Association of Vocational Education Teachers),

Dear Mr. Ralph Böse, State Chair, BLVN (Lower Saxony Association of Vocational School Teachers),

Dear Mr. Stefan Nowatschin, Principal,

Dear vocational education network partners,

Since I am unfortunately unable to attend this 3rd World Excellence Network Conference, I am grateful for the opportunity to share a brief message with you.

It is often said that unemployment is lowest where vocational education and training works effectively—that is, where frameworks are established that provide ideal conditions for the transition from education to a career. However, for vocational education and training to be given high priority, it must enjoy widespread recognition and a high level of prestige.

The focus of this initiative is thus on recognizing and establishing high-quality vocational education and training. It is, therefore, about European educational standards and Europe`s competitiveness. For skills lead to employment. Moreover, a high employment rate remains crucial to the well-being of Europe’s current and future generations as well as ist social welfare systems.

However, it is more than that—this is about sustainability, values, and excellence. As CESI Secretary General, I am also committed to the social policy framework. Because for vocational education and training to be excellent, teachers and administrative staff must also have excellent working conditions.

These start with school buildings, but also extends to the material resources at schools, as well as analog and digital support tools. Excellent working conditions concern workplace safety

and health, but also time for necessary professional development. Such conditions also include the opportunity to network at regional, national, and international levels as well as attractive, performance-based salaries. After all, it should be qualified staff that propels vocational education and training.

The Osnabrück Declaration on Vocational Education and Training in Europe, adopted by the Council of the European Union on November 25, 2020, aims to successfully shape a "European Educational Realm 2025," through regional centers of excellence in vocational education and training. Vocational education and training should be flexible, inclusive, and of high quality with a focus on sustainability and digitalization. Europe depends on regional centers of excellence for vocational education and training as they are hubs of knowledge and innovation. Therefore, investing in sustainable equipment, as well as educating teachers, is crucial. Thus, more human and financial resources are needed!

I would like to congratulate all network partners on this remarkable conference, and above all, you, dear Stefan, for your tireless commitment to sustainable and high-quality vocational training institutions.

Klaus Heeger

Secretary General

Klaus Heeger

European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI)

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