

Automotive Skills Alliance Regional Implementation Working Group

2022

1. Summary of the year

Celebrating two years of the Automotive Skills Alliance (ASA) established back in November 2020 as a large-scale Pact for Skills Partnership, ASA is today the first and the most successful network of partners from the automotive and mobility ecosystem, counting more than 90 members from the industry, education providers, social partners and regions.

This joint action aimed at up- and reskilling of the automotive workforce emerged from the strategic European blueprint projects DRIVES and ALBATTIS and at the regions' level it is moving towards designing and implementing "Regional Pacts for Skills" strategies in close cooperation with regional partners from the most important automotive countries around Europe.

The recognition of the importance of the right skills for the automotive-mobility ecosystem and the need for consideration of the consequences of the European Green and Digital policies on the workers has been confirmed by the European Commission as well as the European Committee of the Regions (CoR).

The year of 2022 was the year of regions. ASA Regional Implementation working group (WG 4) has grown and currently consists of 12 regional members from 9 EU member states. Together we have organized all in all 4 regular WG 4 group meetings, number of online coffee talks, regional workshops during the European Week of Regions and Cities (EURegionsWeek), and the first Annual ASA Conference in Stuttgart. We have participated in several important conferences of the European Committee of the Regions' Automotive Intergroup (CoRAI) and helped to co-found Automotive Regions Alliance (ARA) in the CoR.

In 2022, thanks to our work in the ASA WG 4, we have set the base for united regional force for promoting skills agenda in the transformation of regional and European automotive-mobility ecosystems.

We have had the opportunity to meet in person during several events and discussion tables organized by individual regions, such as Lombardy event back in April 2022,

informal online and onsite gatherings, coffee talks, and European Commission's events dedicated to the green and digital transformation.

Thanks to the effective cooperation with the CoR and its CoRAI regional intergroup, ASA has contributed to voicing the importance of the regional and local level in the process of transformation of the automotive ecosystem from the political perspective.

On the other hand, when it comes to practical realization of up- and reskilling actions, strategic regional pilot projects have been designed and promoted in the Czech Republic, Italy and Germany.

In November 2022, ASA has joined forces with the European Battery Alliance Academy, to extend and focus its ambition to up- and reskilling substantial number of European workers in battery value chain.

Since January 2022, ASA has become officially a legal entity eligible to become a partner of the European projects and contribute its work to bring results of these projects directly to regions. In 2022, on behalf of the ASA regions and in cooperation with them, several important milestones have been achieved:

1.1 Regional cooperation within the Pact for Skills

- **Through the WG 4, ASA has been facilitating exchange of best practices and sharing good examples** from specific regions about their projects on up- and reskilling, and creating links between similar projects, serving as a contact point for regions
- **WG 4 has advanced with innovative methods of brainstorming, aiming at identification of the major regional challenges.** The process has started with the data collecting surveys, through open discussions and collaborative workshops, leading to naming concrete actions at regional level to tackle major challenges using the problem/solution tree methods and continues towards building on concrete examples from advanced regional projects
- **ASA has informed about multiple sources of funding for regions and European policies,** functioning as a contact point for the Pact for Skills between the European Commission and its member regions. With the successful use of the Just Transition Mechanism, the Moravian-Silesian strategic regional project was set as a best practice by the CoR
- **Collaboration within the ASA WG 4 has been serving as a good example** of regional cooperation for other large-scale partnerships for example within chemical or textile ecosystems, and therefore presented during number of large-scale partnership meetings

1.2 Networking and events

- **During this year's European Week of Regions and Cities, ASA regions have co-organized workshop** on how Pact for Skills enables green transformation of the automotive ecosystem. The ASA facilitated workshop that has brought the up- and reskilling transformation projects to a broader audience and open the discussion
- **To support regional cooperation, ASA team has organized number of bilateral meetings and dialogues** with automotive regions from Poland, Italy, Romania, Germany, Sweden, Slovakia etc. To ensure wide regional support for the Pact for Skills, ASA team has also presented the ASA activities and work to number of European regional organizations, including the Earllall, AER, etc.
- To achieve exchange of views among the industrial, educational and regional ASA partners, **the annual ASA conference in Stuttgart hosted a regional workshop, focused on elaborating solutions** to those problems, that were identified in collaborative manner during the WG 4 meeting
- Regarding the political network of regions set by the CoR, so called **Automotive Regions Alliance, ASA has been partner in the process of founding and participated in the first high level political meeting in Leipzig, Germany, on 17th November 2022**
- **ASA regions joined forces with the Czech presidency of the EU Council** and co-organized high-level discussion on the 21st of November 2022. The objective was to hold a discussion on ways forward towards the just transition, hearing inputs from European representatives of employers, employees and regions
- To achieve objectives of up- and reskilling of the European workforce in the whole automotive-mobility ecosystem including battery value chain, **ASA has signed Memorandum of understanding with the European Battery Alliance Academy with joint vision of importance of regional pilot projects.** Both organizations agreed to share data and information in the process
- On behalf of its regions, **the ASA has participated in the stakeholders' consultation on Transition Pathways co-creation process launched by DG GROW of the European Commission in May 2022** publishing the staff working document. ASA has been also represented in the roundtable organized by DG GROW on the November 28th though active involvement of its members, Trnava Region, Lombardy Region, IndustryALL, and Ceemet.

1.3 Cooperation with the European Committee of the Regions

- **Two amendments were successfully submitted to the CoR's opinion drafted by Mr. Adrian Teban on "Towards zero emission road transport: Deploying alternative fuels infrastructure and strengthening CO₂ emission performance standards"**. The explicit recognition of the ASA as the driver of the cross-sectoral cooperation to support the just transition of regions with strong automotive industry was essential to set the ground for further regional cooperation on the concrete actions. Thanks to this, the ASA is recognized as one of the most effective EU cooperation tools to help maximize the EU's industrial competitiveness, stimulating job retention and new job opportunities for current and future workers in the automotive-mobility ecosystem.
- **The ASA has subsequently assisted with preparation of the founding 10-point position of the Automotive Regions Alliance (ARA)**, that was later officially signed as a basis of the ARA in the CoR plenary in June 2022. The ASA is mentioned in the joint position as a platform for cooperation on skills agenda.
- **During the first high level conference of ASA in Leipzig, Saxony, the political declaration and working program 2022/2023 has been signed by 27** participating regions. ASA has been represented in discussion with the commissioner for jobs and social rights, Mr. Nicolas Schmit. ASA aims to continue cooperation with the ARA regions to ensure just and successful transformation for all.
- ASA president and WG 4 leader have participated in several **conferences organized by the CoR Automotive Intergroup (CoRAI)**, focusing on jobs, growth and funding for automotive regions. We see it as a way of exchange information on regional policies and projects, helping other regions to deploy their own strategies with the political support from the start.

1.4 Facilitation of opportunities, intelligence and funding

- **The ASA endorsed the call for the Just transition Mechanism for automotive Regions**. This year the ASA focused not only on providing the latest information on funding opportunities for regions, but also pushed for the new mechanism in order to cope with the transformation.
- In cooperation with the European Commission's support services, ASA cooperated on the **Pact for Skills Regional Hubs**, which supposed to focus on knowledge sharing, networking and funding for the regional pacts for skills.

1.5 Drafting, shaping and promotion of the regional pilot projects

- Through the ASA communications and network, several strategic regional projects have been promoted and recognized by the EU institutions. Moravia-Silesia Region (CS), Lombardy (IT), Stuttgart (DE), Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes (FR), Catalonia (EN) and guest organization at Kemianteollisuus ry of Finland had a chance to present their projects during the WG 4 meetings.
- Best practice examples from ASA regions have been acknowledged and showcased in the yearly **Eurobarometer Report of the CoR** as well as the annual **State of the regions and cities speech** of the CoR's president.

2. Members overview

1	Castilla-y-Leon	Spain
2	Lombardy Region	Italy
3	Moravian-Silesian Region	Czech Republic
4	Cluj-Napoca	Romania
5	Stuttgart Region	Germany
6	Trnava Region	Slovakia
7	Mangualde	Portugal
8	Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes	France
9	Grand Est Alsace Champagne-Ardenne Lorraine	France
10	Catalonia	Spain
11	Skellefteå kommun	Sweden
12	Goteborg	Sweden

3. On the way forward

In view of the upcoming European Year of Skills 2023, the ASA Regional Implementation working group will focus on strengthening cooperation between member regions and create links between ongoing regional projects on up- and reskilling of the automotive-mobility ecosystem workforce.

For this purpose, an indicative planning of meetings for the 2023 will be shared with the members for their comments and inputs. The aim is to organize at least six regular WG 4 meetings online, focused on presenting regional projects, objectives and plans, in order to be able to find synergies among partners at the European level.

A number of in-person meetings and conferences are planned in 2023, in line with the European Commission's plan and ARA work program, to ensure all actions at the European level are streamlined.

The representatives of ARA regions will be invited to hold joint work level meetings to align on up- and reskilling strategies and ensure consideration of the European Commission to deploy additional resources to support such cooperation on a big scale. United approach of the automotive regions, with industrial partners, European employers and employees' organizations, and education providers is the key to successful transformation.

Additional data and information from regions will be required as a base for substantial work of the ASA WG 4. Based on the actual situation on the ground, ASA would be able to provide skills intelligence, information, assistance and forward contacts among regions with similar socio-economic situation and objectives, but also will help to find topic-based links between regional partners and other ASA members. The regional cooperation could help to tackle geographical, attractiveness, timing and skill gaps between territories.

WG4 will also link its strategy with the EBA Academy to ensure battery value chain workers have access to up to date courses using ASA and EBA Academy learning tools. Further tools and usable results from the ongoing ASA projects will be made available for ASA member regions.

The ultimate goal is to continue building the European community around the clear objective of maintaining employability of the automotive workers but also increase attractiveness of the automotive-mobility ecosystem. The human-centric approach should be in the center of every initiative of the WG 4, to make sure regions would succeed in the green and digital transformation.