

European Managers' Review

Building bridges with managers.
Leading for future.

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CEC

EUROPEAN MANAGERS

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European Managers' Review

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About

CEC European Managers is a European social partner that represents the managerial workforce at European level. The confederation gathers managerial trade unions and manager associations across Europe, as well as European sectoral federations.

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EDITORIAL

I have the pleasure to present the first issue of our new review. Its launch comes at a very special time, made of instability, major geopolitical conflict, unpredictable events that shake our certainties, whether economic, societal, or political.

Therefore, more than ever, we must show both mental and organizational flexibility, but also defend the deep and democratic values in which we believe. They are the backbone on which to shape the societies, environments and economies that we want for ourselves and future generations.



Maxime Legrand
President

It is often in crises that Europe has been built or that life in general reinvents itself. The moment is crucial and corresponds to a time when managers in Europe want to be part of the solutions. And let's not forget: **managers are top supporters for more EU democracy**. It seemed important to us to give visibility to their initiatives and those of the organizations affiliated to the CEC. We want to exchange good practices and stimulate European managerial debates.

This review will also be an opportunity to read and put in spotlight the women and men we represent across our national and sectoral members. Because **our wealth is indeed the diversity and experience of our member organizations**. This makes us a particular and indispensable actor in the European social dialogue, but also in many businesses, in European policy-making, and through civil society engagement.

As believers in Europe, we will also embody what the perspective of a European managers is. Particularly, we also hope to **encourage the younger generations** to take up responsibility, in the management of teams or of ambitious projects, being a manager is a great opportunity.

We will explore a dynamic leadership culture with Medeja Lončar from the Managers' Association of Slovenia. Then, we will take you to Sweden, to discuss with Andreas Miller about Ledarna's managerial advancement and priorities. We will then go to France to see that managers' professional lives are also made of struggles and in that specific case to preserve an industry and its know-how. We will talk about the maritime sector and the issues it faced over the last few years with Pierre Maupoint de Vandeul. I thank all the people who participated in the creation of this review and wish you a pleasant reading.



Face to face: Medeja Lončar

CEO of SIEMENS Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia
Former president of CEC member MAS (Managers Association of Slovenia).

MAS is the leading association of managers in Slovenia. Its members benefit from a dynamic business environment, an innovative spirit and relevant services supporting professional growth, including in English.



Why did you get involved with MAS?

I have been with MAS for 14 years now, and I can say that all this time has been extremely interesting and varied, as I have held many positions, including the one of president. From the beginning, I have been driven by a desire for change, sharing mutual experiences, working with people who face similar challenges as I do, and a desire for education.

Above all, I think it's important to lead by example. Through my work in companies, chambers and associations, I want to have a greater impact, I want to actively participate in changes in society. I think it's important to share my experience in the field of digitalization and technological development, as well as in the field of sustainable development, and to highlight the need for greater gender balance in leadership positions.

And MAS is a great platform for all these topics. I would like to convince even more managers, and leaders, that we can only push the boundaries together - for the benefit of all of us and our descendants.

What are your biggest achievements with the organization?

I have taken on many roles in MAS - I am a member, I have been a leader of the Digitalization Working Group, a mentor, a board member of the Women Leaders Section, now I am a board member of MAS and vice president and I have also been president. I am proud that two years ago, when I was elected president, I put sustainable leadership in the broadest sense at the forefront of the association, addressing not only the environmental aspects of leadership, but also the social, economic and personal ones.

I also remember my first interview in the role of president of MAS for the Slovenian newspaper Delo. At that time, I emphasized the need to think about profit in the long term and to focus on the other aspects mentioned above. This sounded almost a little utopian, but today we no longer wonder about it. Sustainable business models already ensure success, as the companies of the most successful members of MAS prove. Slovenian managers are recognized as a driving force of sustainability in Slovenia and Europe.

Face to face: Medeja Lončar

As a woman in a top leading position, what obstacles did you encounter? How has the situation improved for women in this historically masculine environment (technology and STEM)?

I never felt that I had worse development opportunities as a woman. However, it is true that this can also be related to what type of personality we are. I myself have never seen any major obstacles to my development, either objectively or subjectively.

It is true, however, that there are still differences in decision-making positions - and that women are in the minority. We are much more aware now that we need more diverse teams. We women are already relatively well represented in middle management and should now face the challenge of the glass ceiling.

To some extent, women are actually less likely to opt for such positions because we are more pragmatic and weigh the various implications, and on the other hand, there are many other hidden mechanisms that influence this. At MAS we have many activities that address this issue, especially in the Women Leaders Section. The fact is that we are running out of talent, and if a large part of the talent pool is going unused, that has to change.

For example, in order to promote and increase the visibility of women in the technology industry, we launched the Female Engineer of the Year competition in Slovenia. In the future, economic power will be in the hands of those who master new technologies, so we want to encourage girls and women to do this.

Would you say female leadership is different to male? And if yes how different it is?

I would not say that 'female' and 'male' leadership differ significantly. Perhaps women bring more emotional intelligence to the business world, which is sometimes more important for effective leadership than other leadership qualities. Women may also, often by education, tend to be more empathetic, encourage collaboration, and focus more on diversity.

Most importantly, it seems to me that there is a difference between bad and good leadership, regardless of gender. Times of crisis, in particular, have shown how important communication is for leaders. Today, it's clear that you first have to trust employees and at the same time empower them to do their own jobs and take some responsibility. And a good leader does that, whether he or she is a man or a woman.

Medeja Lončar, currently Vice-President of MAS



What are your next professional goals?

For me, two aspects are extremely important in the future: digitalization and the regulation of this technological development and the green transformation. This is where I see my role as a manager - in the context of the three companies I manage and beyond. I also see my role contributing as an experienced manager, also from abroad, to raise awareness and spread the view that the world is plunging into an abyss by chasing short-term profits.

For Siemens, sustainable development is an integral part of our business, and our strategic goals, which benefit our customers as well as our suppliers, investors, employees and the planet, are ambitious. We are determined to achieve them both through our own activities and together with our customers and suppliers.

By 2030, we will be carbon neutral as a company, reduce our suppliers' carbon footprint by 20%, and consistently enforce the principle of a circular economy. By 2050, our entire supply chain will be climate neutral.

All this also applies to Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. At the same time, we are striving for the broadest possible implementation of our 'Fit for Purpose' technologies in our region, which will bring savings (in energy consumption or CO2 emissions) to our customers.

At the same time, I also have the goal of influencing societal challenges, especially in the direction of more women choosing engineering and technical professions, as I mentioned earlier, and achieving greater gender balance in leadership positions. But it's not just about 'naked' equality. More and more research confirm that companies with mixed teams are more successful, more profitable and more productive, creative and innovative.

What will you promote and involve with at MAS?

At MAS, we continue to focus on sustainable leadership. Business is indeed an indispensable driver of sustainable change, and managers have a key role to play, as their skills enable them to act as facilitators of ideas, people, and processes.

The Covid-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine have reinforced the importance of sustainability, so we need competent, alert and forward-looking managers more than ever. Because of the great changes and the rapid development of new technologies, the topics of reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning also seem to me to be extremely important.

What advice would you give to younger managers?

Be confident and courageous, go your own way and pursue your goals while staying true to the values you hold dear.





Focus: Ledarna

shaping Sweden's greatest leaders

Sweden's managers' association Ledarna was established as early as 1905. It represents managers from all industries and all levels. In 2013, the Swedish organisation decided to focus its activities on managers solely. Today, Ledarna represents 95 000 managers across the whole country.

Ledarna's headquarters in Stockholm

ledarna
SVERIGES CHEFSORGANISATION

On the kick off meeting of our working group on Gender Equality and Diversity organised in Stockholm, we met with Ledarna's president Andreas Miller. We discussed sustainability and Ledarna's specific approach to helping managers succeed.

As a former journalist and editor in chief, Andreas Miller joined Ledarna in 2006 as he needed an organisation to support his needs. After several years as a member, he was elected president in 2018: «I joined the organisation as I became a manager myself, I realised I wasn't a member of any employees group and that I was not owning the company either. I was in-between top-level executives and the rest of the employees; and because I had to handle very special issues, I needed to be involved with an organisation that understood my needs, gave me support, and new skills.»

Embracing great leadership

The Swedish organisation has always wanted and worked to inspire its members to become great leaders. Leaders that would face new challenges and improve their businesses while respecting ethical processes and values:

«We believe that a well-established leadership and managers are both instrumental to create successful companies and committed employees. Great leadership benefits everyone» explains Ledarna's president Andreas Miller.

The Swedish definition of great leadership resides in the willingness of managers to be present and visible for their employees and companies. Sweden's managers organisation aims for quality and specificity. Ledarna stands out as it provides very specific counselling, since most of its counsellors were managers in their previous jobs. To further achieve these objectives, Ledarna provides training, courses, and counsel to help managers succeed at work and with their personal life goals.

«We are the voice of managers, and we want to serve them. We understand what it is to be a manager and the challenges of this profession. And we understand that the manager has the most crucial position within the company, that is why we provide support based on individual needs. Our marketing department identifies the trends rising within the society whilst the education department will create tailored courses and workshops to support the needs of our members.»

Focus: Ledarna Sweden

Since the pandemic, Ledarna's webinars reached the highest record of participation with sometimes over a thousand attendants per session. The organisation adjusted their courses and switched to an online format which attracted many managers that were not living in Stockholm and nearby. As managers show flexibility and adapt to new situations, Ledarna replicates for their activities.

Ledarna's vision for great leadership lays in the understanding of emotional intelligence and the role it plays for managerial relations: «Managers must be dedicated to their visions, their goals. Being communicative and giving time to your employees is also very important. Above all, great managers should be able to listen and understand the feelings of their group»- adds Andreas Miller.

Managers of tomorrow

Ledarna is at the forefront of sustainability challenges within companies and sustainable leadership. For many years the organisation has helped managers and leaders to understand climate change and the issues it brings into the world of work.

The Swedish organisation welcomed CEC's project on Sustainable Leadership (SustainableLeaders) and was very attentive to the results and progress of the trainings.

Sustainability remains at the heart of Ledarna's work program as Andreas Miller explains:

«The transition to a sustainable society will always be our concern. And because managers are so important, we need to keep them motivated and knowledgeable. We know it is a crucial issue for them. Some of them are very worried about it because they know jobs will disappear and others will be created. We are all standing in front of this challenge and managers must understand the worries of their team too. And we must be able to give them the tools to face this challenge.»

Besides sustainability, the topics of wage dynamics, gender equality and diversity will also remain central. Moreover, Ledarna wishes to focus on managers well-being and mental health. A study recently showed that one in four managers don't have the time for recovery and reflexion after an accident or illness. This alarming figure is good neither for the company nor the society, which is why Ledarna will search for alternatives to ensure the well-being of managers.

Inspired Europeans

Maintaining dialogue and cooperation among all CEC members across Europe is very important and one of Ledarna's priorities. CEC member organisations share common interests. That's why for Ledarna's president it seems relevant to exchange about all projects that were successful. Getting to know the issues per country and debating could create synergies and help voice managerial issues better to European institutions and beyond.



Andreas Miller, President of Ledarna since 2018

Panorama: transition in Belfort

CFE-CGC fights for industries and jobs

Belfort in France is an old industrial site that reflects the French energy transition. It is a site where gas, nuclear and renewables have been developed. With the take-over by General Electric, the site has been threatened with closure. Thanks to the support of CFE-CGC, the site now explores its future with hydrogen production.

Not far from the Rhine River and the culinary famous region of Franche-Comté, the French department of Belfort witnessed all industrial revolutions. Its dynamic and ideal geographic location attracts foreign investments. In 2014, the American group General Electric acquired, with the agreement of the French government, the "Power and Grid" branch of Alstom. Employees and unionists expected activities to flourish, but General Electric disappointed and jeopardized jobs. CFE-CGC and SUD, two French trade unions, teamed up to save thousands jobs in the region. Looking back on 8 years of battle.

2014- 2019: fragile onsets

In 2014, General Electric bought Alstom's Energies branch, and assured both the French governments and workers, that they would develop industries in the region. The American group also promised to create about a thousand jobs and to locate its headquarters for the nuclear, digital, renewables, grid and gas turbines sectors in France for a period of 10 years. Months passed by and none of the engagements taken were implemented by GE. CFE-CGC and SUD started to question their new employer's announcements and motivations, they then drafted a new industrial project for the group.

In spring 2019, the American firm announced dismissing 792 employees on the Belfort site, on the grounds of the gas turbine market crash. Both unions decided to take the matter to court. After months of negotiation, in the autumn of 2019, an agreement had been signed between the French government, GE, and the unions. This agreement included that GE would maintain the Belfort site to a minimum of 1 275 employees, the headquarters of the 50 Hz technology for the turbines would remain in Belfort, an employment and skills management project would be put in place, and finally 200 jobs would be created. Conversely, the unions would give up on their request to court.

2020-2021 : empty promises

In spring of 2020, while the consequences of the pandemic stroke France's economy and society, GE implied that they could relocate their activities to Saudi Arabia and the United States. To this date, they drafted a redundancy plan threatening 238 jobs in the nuclear sector. This announcement called for unionists to react: they organized a protest that gathered 300 employees, followed by negotiations with the management, which concluded that only about 144 jobs could be dismissed.

A few months afterwards, both CFE-CGC and SUD summoned GE to respect the agreements of 2014 and 2019. But the answer they obtained from GE disappointed many. Scott Strazik, CEO of Gas Power, argued that the company would honour the agreements as long as the economic context allows for it. From there onward, both unions decided to move forward and gave a formal notice to the French government to implement the agreements of 2014. In May 2021, French authorities recognised that General Electric had not honoured their part of the agreement. CFE-CGC and SUD were relieved to see their effort acknowledged. They decided to keep this line of action and during the summer of 2021, they called the government to recognise **“the death of a strategically important industrial site in France”**.

In November 2021, Larry Culp, the general director of General Electric, announced the split of GE into three independent companies: health, aviation, and energy. The firm will focus its activities on the USA and should leave France in 2024. Philippe Petitcolin, a member of the trade union CFE-CGC and leader of the activities in Belfort, explains: «The risks of new layoffs are imminent. Jobs cancellation within the French sector are very important, it will affect corporate and administrative entities (HR, IT, accounts). It could also impact the engineering entities that respond to the challenges of the sustainable transition in the sectors of nuclear energy, electric grids, and the renewables.» Around 11 000 jobs are currently threatened.

2022: Hydrogen for Belfort?

The industrial group McPhy, producer of various equipment for the production and distribution of decarbonized hydrogen, picked Belfort to build its factory.

The construction should be over by the first semester of 2024 and the site could hire as many as 400 employees.

This highly ambitious project represents around 30 million euros of investments. A large opportunity for both workers of the site and the inhabitants of the region who could benefit from this new sector. As observed by Christophe Grudler, a former political consellor for the department and MEP member of the ITRE Committee (Committee on Industry, Research and Energy):

«Belfort has been part of all the industrial revolutions and its industries have always relied on energy, boilers, and locomotives. The energy sector represents 1000 companies, almost 4 billion euros turnover and 7700 jobs.»

He continued: «In Belfort, we are Global Players, which means that we play in the big league. General Electric's redundancy plan for its turbine activity is ridiculous. It affects the brainpower, before affecting production. The engineers who work on integration in power stations know how to make coal as well as nuclear or hydrogen. There will be a profusion of hydrogen initiatives in the north of Franche-Comté. It's the Eldorado of tomorrow!»

McPhy will receive the financial support of several funds and notably the Maugis fund (of up to 10 million euros). The Maugis fund is financed by a penalty of 50 million euros inflicted to General Electric due to the non-respect of the initial agreement signed with the French authorities and the unions, to create 1,000 jobs when it bought Alstom's energy branch.



Panorama: Belfort Fighting for industries

McPhy could also benefit from a European program IPCEI (Important Project of Common European Interest). This funding plan favours competitive pacts between companies and notably in the hydrogen sector. The IPCEI is funded by the European Recovery Plan.

Supported by CFE-CGC, a French organisation (Apsiis, Association de Préfiguration de Sociétés d'Intégration et Ingénierie Systèmes) will ensure the implementation of this project and encourage creation of similar companies in Belfort. Philippe Petitcolin, who co-created Apsiis, explains: **«We have launched Apsiis to make sure we keep skills and know-how in northern Franche-Comté. We want to bring together engineers and investors to create more companies and jobs. We will start to identify new technologies and link them with the competences we already have in the region.»**

The organization will lobby for nuclear power and promote Small modular Reactors: «France is 10 years late compared to the USA and Russia. Our tools could be used for SMR Small Modular Reactor technologies and if our country wants to be a relevant player in this sector, the only place to do it would be Belfort» - promises Philippe Petitcolin.



Philippe Petitcolin, CFE-CGC



Outlook:

Towards a future-fit maritime sector

Zoom on the maritime sector. At a time of economic crisis and the war in Ukraine, we take a look at a sector in transition. Interview with Pierre Maupoint de Vandeul, President of CFE-CGC Maritime.

What are the socio-economic challenges the maritime sector is facing since the start of the pandemic?

Nearly 90% of what we consume in Europe has travelled across the seas whether for the design or for the supply chain elements. The pandemic has totally disrupted the gigantic maritime logistics from the moment it appeared in China around the end of 2019.

Hundreds of thousands of seafarers have been trapped in ships stuck in ports around the world because of the pandemic. Governments, shipowners, and trade unions have had to deal with unprecedented issues such as the organisation of quarantines, overrun of embarkation times, exhaustion on board, and the implementation of specific and very heavy health protocols.

The crisis was obviously easier to manage in countries where there was a culture of social dialogue and a capacity to quickly find maritime adaptations to the health measures taken by the different States. The crisis then evolved during the summer of 2020, indeed as major clusters formed because lockdowns ended. Many personnel crew started to feel immense fatigue because they were forced to apply preventive health measures 24/7 but also because they spent months without being able to go home and see their families.

The weak resumption of international links, as well as the phasing out of governments suffering in turn from epidemic peaks, have caused this imbalance between the private and professional lives of seafarers to persist until the end of 2021. The issue of rapid and privileged access to vaccines was also very complex to manage.

« One of the main challenges today is to deal with an unprecedented shortage of seafarers, which is already leading ships being blocked due to a lack of available personnel. »

Regarding the social aspect, this period has unfortunately contributed to a sharp deterioration of the working conditions. For instance, the organisation of the workflow deteriorated and generated longer boarding times.

As a result, there is an unprecedented loss of appeal worldwide, and very markedly in Europe, for the on-board professions and particularly for the officers we represent. One of the main challenges today is to deal with a shortage of seafarers, which is already leading to ships being blocked due to a lack of available personnel. This situation also disrupts the schedules of those who remain, again contributing to demotivating them...

Towards a future-fit maritime sector

The crisis has only exacerbated an already difficult situation, given the very strong globalisation rate of this sector. The effects of social dumping have in fact already contributed to the precariousness of on-board jobs. To put it plainly, the use of flags of convenience for ships serving Europe would be tantamount to seeing a Chinese factory with its local operating costs set up a few metres from a European factory!

Fortunately, in the face of this unbridled globalisation, international social dialogue has been able to establish safeguards. The maritime sector has its own international conventions at the ILO, one for fishermen and the other for merchant seamen. This allows, when countries control these standards correctly, the respect of an international social base often superior to that of many countries of origin of seafarers.

This pandemic has also highlighted the strong dependence on the maritime sector and the importance of preserving and developing skills and jobs. This observation is therefore useful in convincing States of the key role of their seafarers. In Europe, the situation is clear: too many strategic vessels such as gas tankers, oil tankers, or even and above all cable-layers for digital independence, see their operating capacity conditional on human resources from outside the EU. We therefore advocate the recognition of strategic maritime activities for which training, and employment aids must be put in place.

What are the environmental challenges and opportunities?

The major challenge for our sector remains the ecological transition of ships to reduce their atmospheric emissions and their impact on marine biodiversity. Unfortunately, the European momentum on this issue has been slowed down by the pandemic.

It requires a great deal of anticipation, research and development resources, and then heavy financing to launch projects for new ships or adapt the existing fleet. The priorities of shipping companies over the last two years have clearly been focused on organising the continuation of activity and many projects have been put on hold.

« The major challenge for our sector remains the ecological transition of ships to reduce their atmospheric emissions and their impact on marine biodiversity. Unfortunately, the European momentum on this issue has been slowed down by the pandemic. »

This issue must not be put aside but instead become one of the levers of the European recovery plans for the maritime sector to maintain and accelerate this transition.



In CFE-CGC Marine's contributions, we ask that priority be given to funding projects that also include an ambitious policy in terms of maritime employment. We believe that all aid for recovery must be conditional on strong social and environmental counterparts. For example, in France, we could imagine that the loans guaranteed by the government, issued in an emergency to ensure cash flow for companies, could be transformed into environmental loans for companies that maintain the implementation of energy transition projects often initiated before the crisis.

What is your federation doing to support the sector and its managers in this context?

A very large proportion of European seafarers are officers and therefore fall fully within our scope of action. Seagoing managers are not spared the consequences of the crisis and social dumping. In addition to what we are doing at national level for the French officers, most of whom have placed their trust in the CFE-CGC over the past few years, our actions at European level focus mainly on the need for stronger social and fiscal regulation of regular intra-EU activities, as well as international passenger services between the European Union and the United Kingdom, or towards the Maghreb countries. The ferry business represents a major source of employment for seafarers in Europe, which must be protected from international competition.

Within the framework of the French Presidency of the EU 2022, CFE-CGC, with the participation of the CEC, was able to put forward 12 proposals for improvement, mainly the idea of imposing the most favourable social legislation of the countries served and a real dissuasive policy in terms of standards controls.

How did the war in Ukraine impact the sector?

Ukraine is one of the countries with the most seafarers in the world. Many of them sail on European ships. From one day to the next, they found themselves trapped in this conflict. Some of them were worried knowing that their loved ones were in danger, and dealt with the dilemma of staying on board to keep their jobs or returning home to their families but with the risk of not being able to re-embark. For the Russian seafarers, difficulties also arose because the sanctions against their country had an impact on them, for example, in receiving their salaries without difficulty.

More generally, this crisis, for the maritime sector, generated the same effect as the COVID crisis, i.e. an awareness of the fragility of a totally globalised economic model which had not taken into account the return of war to Europe and the tensions between great powers. The maritime independence of European countries appears here again as an essential issue and, on social aspects, it requires more ambitious policies for the training of seafarers and the protection of their jobs.

What development paths do you see for a maritime sector that meets the challenges of the future?

We are now waiting for more strategic vision in this world that has been weakened by the health crisis, war, and global warming, which are causing major upheavals, including a reorganisation of goods flows. A new form of intra-EU maritime cabotage, greener and more social, must be able to emerge to accompany the unanimous will of the Member States for a more productive Europe and, as mentioned above, less dependent on other major powers.





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