



Skills anticipation methods and practices

Identifying emerging technologies and skill needs for policy

Policy learning forum (PLF)

14 and 15 June 2018, Cedefop, Thessaloniki, Greece

General information

Venue	Cedefop Email: Konstantinos.Pouliakas@cedefop.europa.eu
Organiser(s)	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), Thessaloniki, Greece
No of participants	Maximum 80
Participation	By selection
Participant profile	High-level EU and national policy-makers, experts on methods of skills anticipation
Type of event	Policy learning forum (PLF)
Working language	English

PLF background

Skills anticipation has emerged as a key policy response to combat skill mismatch in the labour market. Cedefop's European skills and jobs survey (ESJS) revealed that as many as 48% of EU adult workers experience skill mismatch, either overskilling or skill gaps, during the hiring process. The degree of skill mismatch varies significantly across EU Member States. For this reason, skills anticipation, the collection of skills intelligence to inform training and growth strategies, has been identified as a key objective of the European Commission's *New skills agenda for Europe*.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) launched in 2016 a new thematic activity – *Assisting EU countries in skills matching* ⁽¹⁾ to support mutual learning and the exchange of good practices across EU Member States. The initiative aims to assist EU Member States in developing, improving or further refining their skills anticipation and matching systems. Since 2016, Cedefop has worked closely together with national authorities and key national stakeholder networks in six EU+ countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Malta, Slovakia and Iceland) providing support in setting up methodological

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/assisting-eu-countries-skills-matching>

instruments that collect labour market and skills intelligence, and in promoting effective dissemination and use of results in different policy areas (such as education and training, employment, active labour market policies etc.).

Skills governance refers to the process of putting in place appropriate institutional structures (intermediary, formal or informal, skills bodies), operational processes (regulation, management, financial and non-financial incentives) and dissemination channels (online or offline platforms) that may aid stakeholder interaction and policy reaction based on reliable labour market information signals.

To ensure the effectiveness of the country reviews, in 2017 Cedefop conducted scoping exercises among formally appointed national steering committees comprised of major stakeholders, in each of the four countries under review (Bulgaria, Greece, Estonia, Slovakia). The consultations resulted in the formulation of several common concerns and requests for support by the national stakeholders on developing specific skills anticipation methods. These include:

- ⇒ skills forecasting methods can be limited in their potential to provide in-depth information on specific emerging technologies, changing job profiles and skill needs in key economic industries;
- ⇒ in light of marked structural changes affecting economic sectors and occupations, partly spurred by the great economic recession, technological foresight methods are highly valuable, as they can make sense of emerging trends and drivers of changing skill needs, their interactions and possible disruptions, and provide fertile ground for exploring and shaping alternative futures;
- ⇒ strengthening skills governance is dependent on the adoption of participatory skills anticipation methods and tools, most notably skills foresights;
- ⇒ sector-based studies enabling in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis of sector-specific skills, competences and qualification needs can be a useful starting point for planning and revising VET programmes;
- ⇒ tracer studies or graduate tracking surveys are an invaluable tool for monitoring and evaluating the medium- to long-term impact of training programmes.

Aim of the PLF

This PLF is a key element and output of the Cedefop country support programme. Its aim is to provide a platform for the national stakeholders of participating countries as well as other interested experts, for learning and discussing how to put appropriate key skills anticipation methods into practice. To meet their identified learning needs, the PLF will focus on methods and practices of technological skills foresights, sector-based skills anticipation tools and the implementation and practical steps of setting up tracer studies.

Format

The PLF will begin with lectures providing a general overview of the strengths and weaknesses of different methods of skills intelligence and anticipation. Individual case study

sessions will follow, focused on technological foresights, sector-based skills anticipation, and tracer studies. Interactive group sessions throughout the event will aim to assist the countries under review with implementing or improving their skills anticipation implementation plans.

The PLF will require and depend on active contribution by all participants:

- experts will present theories and new developments related to the three specific instruments of skills anticipation examined;
- national practitioners will focus on examples from practical implementation in specific countries or case studies;
- experts from international organisations will reflect on the challenges of, and barriers to, making skills anticipation tools relevant for policy-making;
- during the PLF, participants are expected to contribute to the debate and exchange experiences, while tailored interactive group exercises will aim at providing the country teams with a useful roadmap for developing or refining their national skills anticipation exercises.

References

ETF-Cedefop-ILO guides to anticipating and matching skills and jobs

- Volume 1: [Using labour market information \(2016\)](#)
- Volume 2: [Developing skills foresights, scenarios and forecasts \(2016\)](#)
- Volume 3: [Working at sectoral level \(2016\)](#)
- Volume 4: [The role of employment service providers \(2015\)](#)
- Volume 5: [Developing and running an establishment skills survey \(2017\)](#)
- Volume 6: [Carrying out tracer studies \(2016\)](#)