

**SKILLSNET e-bulletin: April 2016****Highlight of the month****Unravelling the Mystery of Skills**

The confusion that reigns about what 'skills' are, is rooted in different academic disciplines. In particular, in the heart of social sciences exist three schools of thought that one needs to consider when discoursing around skills and their relation to the world of work: economics, psychology and sociology. Skills Panorama has chosen not to limit to the one or the other approach, but take into account all of them offering thus, a Panoramic and rich approach to skills in the EU! Economists often measure skills supply using the levels and fields of education of the population, and skills demand by the employment needs for specific occupations and jobs. The Skills Panorama offers a wide range of skills indicators regarding both the demand for and supply of skills across sectors of economic activity and countries. Read more on the Skills Panorama website [here](#).

News from Cedefop**Call for Tenders: User experience (UX), support and development services for the Skills Panorama**

The aim of this contract is to provide the following services related to the Skills Panorama web portal, its associated content management system (CMS) and tools: project management, analysis of web portal requirements, creative direction, user experience design, software development, internet marketing, hosting, testing, maintenance and support. The deadline for submitting tenders is on the **31.05.2016** while requests for additional information/clarification should be received by **20.05.2016**. The answers to such requests, if any, will be published on Cedefop's website. More information can be found [here](#).

Investing in one's skills: Opportunities for EU citizens

The 2008 economic crisis led to high levels of (youth) unemployment and highlighted the shortcomings of the EU in keeping up with the development of skills that foster employability and innovation. The European Commission recognises the need to take action and places the development of skills and the improvement of education and training systems at the centre of its priorities and new Investment Plan. Some relevant, key EU initiatives are presented in this Skills Panorama blog article which can be found [here](#).

New Skills Panorama Analytical highlight: Focus on Skill challenges in Europe

The European economy – and that of all the Member States within it - is dependent upon possessing and using the skills that will allow it compete with the rest of the world. Evidence based on trends in the share of the EU's labour force by level of qualification, a proxy for the stock of skills, points towards the EU's labour supply becoming increasingly skilled with the passage of time. The full text of the Analytical highlight can be downloaded in a pdf format from the [Skills Panorama](#).

Same work, same pay – MEPS react to new proposal on posted workers

Parliament debated proposed revised rules for workers who are employed in one Member State and temporarily sent to another by their employer, as presented by Commissioner Marianne Thyssen. Political groups' speakers were divided: for centre-left MEPs, it was not far-reaching enough to prevent exploitation of workers, while centre-right MEPs expressed concern about its impact on competitiveness and SMEs. More can be found [here](#).

Call for Experts: Skills & career development in Blue Economy

The European Commission (DG MARE) has published a call for application for the selection of experts to set up an informal expert group on "Skills and career development in the Blue Economy". The task of the group is to advise the Commission on matters pertaining to the education, training, skills and career development within the blue economy. More information can be found [here](#).

News from Skillsnet members**What happens to economies when education levels increase?**

For at least the past one 100 years, the growth of industrialised economies has been remarkably balanced; output per worker has increased at a roughly constant rate, while the capital-output ratio, the real return on capital, and the shares of capital and labour in national income have remained fairly constant. Continue reading [here](#).

The changing meaning of 'working age'

'Working age' is usually defined as 15 to 64 years. This definition is for example used for the 'old-age dependency ratio', with people aged 65 and over being labelled 'dependent'. However, almost five million people over 65 were in employment in 2014, a remarkable increase of 48% from 3.3 million in 2004 to 4.9 million in 2014. The employment rate of people aged 65-69 has reached 11.7%; for the entire population over the age of 65, the employment rate reaches 5.5%. More information can be found [here](#).

Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment kicks off

The spring Tripartite Social Summit will focus on "A strong partnership for job creation and inclusive growth – taking stock of the new start for social dialogue". The Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment will take place in Brussels, bringing together European employer and employee representatives ("social partners"), the European Commission, EU Heads of State or Government, and Employment and Social Affairs Ministers from the countries holding the current and future EU Council Presidencies. More information can be found [here](#).

ILO: Young and female: A double "strike" for women entering the workforce

An ILO/MasterCard Foundation study sheds new light on the challenges facing young women's participation in the world of work. For decades promoting gender equality and empowering women has been on the development agenda. We know that empowering women, and particularly young women, to make their own choices for an active participation in the economy makes a difference on so many fronts. The research shows an abundance of positive links. And yet it's clear that another generation of young women remains outside the reach of what should be their full economic and self-empowerment potential. More information can be found [here](#).

The integrationsvereinbarung : republic of Austria

The Integrationsvereinbarung is an Austrian law, already adopted in 2004 and renewed in 2012 and 2014 in order to establish for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers a system of learning German in Austria, in order to get a right of stay. The nucleus is that every immigrant, refugee or asylum seeker as well as persons with a red-white-red card must learn German, within a reasonable period of time. The system is stressed due to the mass immigration since summer 2015, with persons from Syria, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, to the EU via Austria. The whole website information system is renewed and has a vivid interest for many people in Austria. More can be found [here](#).

Anticipating and matching skills and jobs

Skills anticipation is a strategic and systematic process through which labour market actors identify and prepare to meet future skills needs, thus helping to avoid potential gaps between skills demand and supply. Skills anticipation enables training providers, young people, policy-makers, employers and workers to make better educational and training choices, and through institutional mechanisms and information resources leads to improved use of skills and human capital development. This guidance note explains the key components of skills anticipation systems, including data, methodologies, tools and institutions. Read more [here](#).

Why do many European graduates end up in lower-paid jobs?

Skill mismatch has become an issue of increasing policy concern in the aftermath of the economic crisis, which saw high levels of youth unemployment in the EU economy. Weak labor demand, combined with rising levels of higher education attainment, have increased over-education rates in many advanced European economies. However, the policy debate about the underlying causes and significance of the phenomenon of over-education is yet unresolved. Part of the wage penalty of overeducated university graduates can be attributed to their lower levels of work experience and training, while mismatch is also naturally higher for young workers at the early stages of their careers. More can be found [here](#).

Taking a place-based approach to employment and skills strategies



Across the OECD, efforts are being taken to boost overall growth and investment. A skilled workforce represents a key marketing chip for local economies to attract investment and opportunity. However, efforts to boost job creation and employment can be

undermined by potential skills mismatches or situations of low-skills equilibrium at the local level, which can be a trap that negatively impacts growth and the productive capacity of local economies (Job Creation and Local Economic Development, OECD, 2014). Read the full blog article of Jonathan Barr [here](#).

Governance and financing of apprenticeships

The study identifies 'favourable' or 'ideal' (from a theoretical point of view) governance structures and financing arrangements (normative model) that would support sustainable implementation of high-quality apprenticeship. Against the backdrop of this model, current structures in these countries are assessed and areas that need action identified. Possible options as to how apprenticeship or similar schemes could be further developed in each country are presented. More can be found [here](#).



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Stay connected to Skills Panorama



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Reforming regulation of professions: results of mutual evaluation and way forward

Date: 28th April 2016, **Place:** Brussels, Belgium

Stakeholders, including national authorities and professional organisations, will discuss the mutual evaluation of regulated professions, its results and national action plans to address outdated or disproportionate regulation. Stakeholders will also have an opportunity to discuss the follow-up measures to improve access to professions announced by the European Commission in the Single Market Strategy last October. Finally, the event will be centred on the importance and economic impact of regulated professions in Europe. New case studies and the results of a recent EU-wide survey on occupational regulation will be presented for the first time. More information can be found [here](#).

How to make visible and value skills and competence of refugees: exchanging national approaches and experiences

Date: 28th – 29th April 2016, **Place:** The Hague, Netherlands

The April 2016 peer learning activity (PLA) in The Hague provides an opportunity for national stakeholders and experts to exchange experiences on approaches developed at local, national and European level to make visible and value refugees' skills and competences. The PLA is organised in cooperation between the Dutch National Coordination Point ECVET, the Dutch National Coordination Point NLQF and the European Commission and Cedefop. Information can be found [here](#).

Tackling the Skills Gap - The Golden Key to Economic Growth

Date: 26th – 27th May 2016, **Place:** Maastricht, Netherlands

This seminar has been especially designed for individuals working in the fields of education and training, economic growth, employment and the labour market at national, regional and local level. This includes managers and expert practitioners from ministries and government agencies responsible for economic growth, skills development and employment creation, regional development agencies, employment services, vocational training institutions, chambers of commerce, industry organisations, trade unions etc. More information can be found [here](#).

The impact of digitalisation on work: Building up national agendas for better implementation of digital changes

Date: 26th – 27th May 2016, **Place:** Dublin, Ireland

Foundation Seminar Series 2016 will take place in Dublin on 26 – 27 May (Session 1) and Berlin, 13 - 14 October (Session 2). This first session will provide the participants with a basis to start working on the topic of digitalisation and the implications for changing work organisation, skills at work, employment and working conditions. Eurofound researchers and relevant external experts will share findings and experiences on different aspects of the topic, as inputs to the interactive learning during the seminars. More can be found [here](#).

The Skillsnet network



Skillsnet members have the opportunity to inform other members of our network about new projects, events, activities or publications related to early identification of skill needs throughout the year. If you are interested to inform other members, please submit your short article / information (max of 100 words) to **Ioannis Katsikis** whenever you have any news to disseminate.

