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PRESS RELEASE

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Coordinated effort needed to put the focus on lifelong learning and basic skills

A coordinated and systematic approach to skills training is needed to ensure that all Europeans can face the challenges of the green and digital transitions, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) emphasised at their Fourth policy learning forum on 16 November.

This was a central message of the [forum on upskilling pathways – a vision for the future](#). The forums allow countries to learn from one another and explore ways to improve training for adults with low skill levels.

FOURTH POLICY LEARNING FORUM on upskilling pathways

16 November 2022
Virtual event



**A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE**

#UpskillingPathways

Laurențiu Plosceanu, President of the EESC Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship said: ‘COVID-19 has resulted in an unprecedented change in the world of work. The need for digital skills has become more visible. Equipping people with the skills needed to keep up with the changing world of work must be a priority.’

At least 50 million adults in Europe lack basic literacy, numeracy and digital competencies.

In addition, workplaces are offering fewer opportunities to upskill workers, making Cedefop’s role more crucial, argued the Agency’s Head of Department for VET and Skills Antonio Ranieri. The [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) set a target that at least 60% of all adults should participate in training every year by 2030.

Cedefop Deputy Director Mara Brugia said: ‘While low-skilled adults deserve special attention, it is essential that all adults have the chance to develop and upgrade their skills, regardless of their labour market status and socioeconomic background. This is a prerequisite if we want to ensure that they can manage frequent transitions and succeed in their lives and careers.’

Thematic country reviews

The event was an opportunity to discuss the preliminary findings of Cedefop’s thematic country reviews on upskilling pathways for low-skilled adults, in France and Italy.

These results showed the importance of local organisations and partnerships in reaching out to ‘the invisibles’ – people most at risk of social exclusion – and highlighted the importance of turning ad hoc projects into sustainable initiatives.

‘There are many programmes, tools and funds offering upskilling opportunities. It is a challenge for any adult to navigate this jungle of offers,’ said EESC member Tatjana Babrauskiene.

Better cooperation needed

The European Union’s [Council Recommendation on upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults](#) put skills high on the policy agenda, stated David Kunst, policy officer at the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

However, opportunities for up- and reskilling varied across Member States and implementing the Recommendation’s three steps – providing skills assessment, personalised learning offers and skills validation – requires the strategic coordination and cooperation of many partners.

‘We need to invest in partnerships and infrastructure. Reaching the low-qualified requires working together with social partners and civil society and with those who do not traditionally focus on upskilling,’ he said, adding that as the Commission has made 2023 the European Year of Skills, it should be used to provide impetus for further initiatives.

More information

Cedefop publication: [Empowering adults through upskilling and reskilling pathways](#)

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The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) is the European Union’s reference centre for vocational education and training, skills and qualifications.

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