



## Chapter 2. PERCEPTIONS: IMPORTANCE

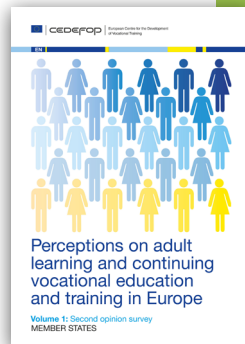
# Perceptions on adult learning and continuing vocational education and training in Europe

Volume 1: Second opinion survey

MEMBER STATES

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Please cite this chapter as:

Cedefop (2020). Chapter 2: Perceptions: importance. In: Cedefop, *Perceptions on adult learning and continuing vocational education and training in Europe: Second opinion survey: Member States. Vol. 1*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 117, pp. 20-32.

<http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/465812>

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ISBN: 978-92-896-3075-7

doi:10.2801/465812

TI-02-20-741-EN-N



## CHAPTER 2.

# Perceptions: importance

The survey shows that adult learning and continuing vocational education and training (CVET) have a positive image. They are regarded as important for work and life in all Member States.

This chapter discusses the extent to which Member States see adult learning and CVET as important and the reasons why people take part in them. Section 4.3, in the context of access, considers why adults do not participate in adult learning and CVET and what measures may encourage them to do so.

In all Member States, respondents are convinced of the importance of learning throughout life. They anticipate adult learning and CVET becoming more important over the next 10 years and there is strong support in all countries for governments to prioritise investment in adult learning and CVET.

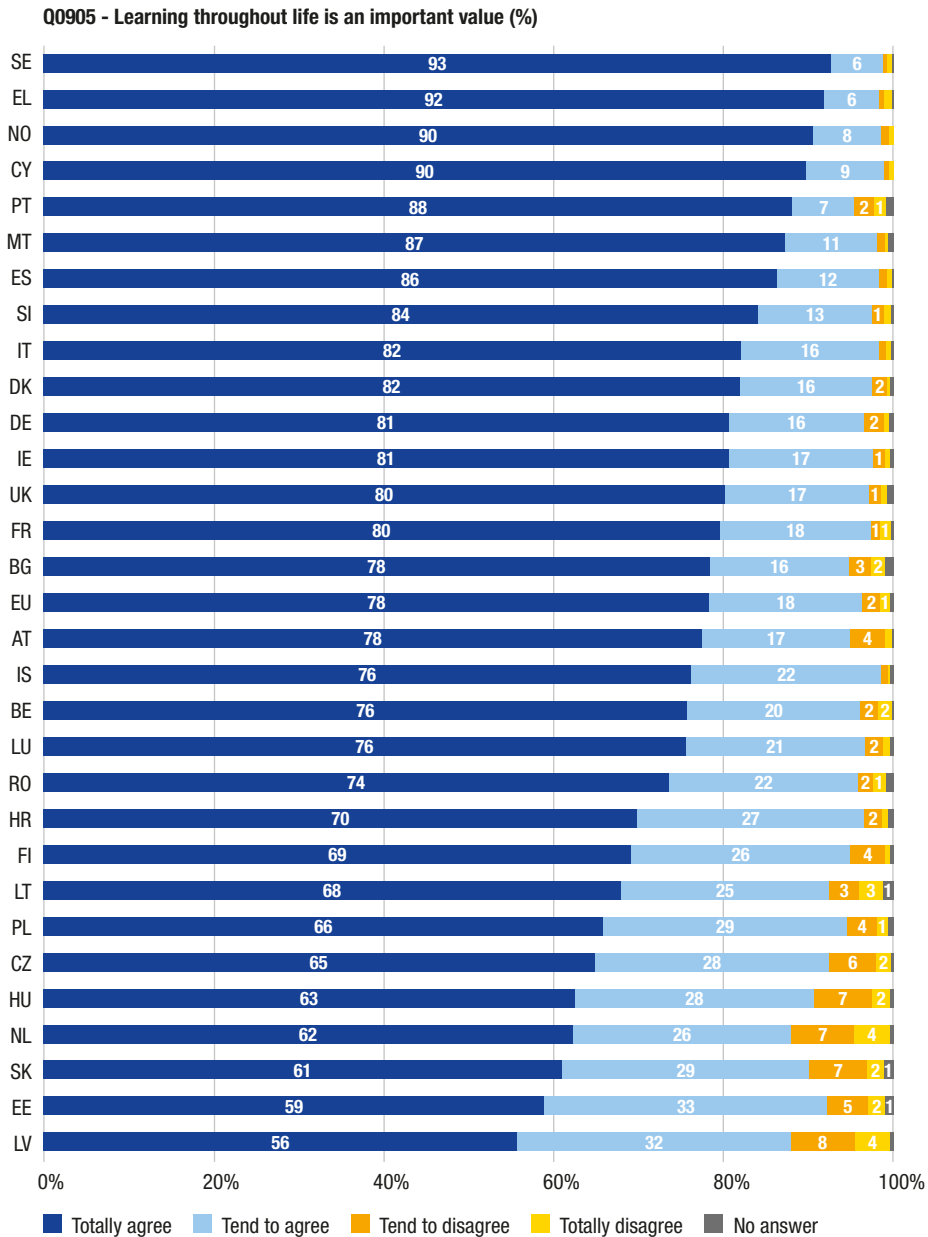
People have various reasons for taking part in adult learning and CVET but the main ones, in all Member States, are personal development and to improve job skills. These reasons apply to organised formal and non-formal learning as well as to informal learning done on one's own. Although personal development is the main reason people take part in adult learning and CVET, many emphasise the importance of job-related learning. In all Member States, to varying degrees, respondents say that skill needs in their jobs are changing constantly and that they lack technical and general skills.

### 2.1. Value

Almost all respondents (96%) agree that continuing to learn throughout life is important (Figure 1). At least 90% of respondents agree in every country, except Latvia (88%) and the Netherlands (89%).

There is also a clear expectation that adult learning and CVET will become more important in enabling people to progress in their careers (Figure 2). Overall, 84% of respondents (39% say definitely; 45% probably) say that adult learning and CVET will be more important for career progression in 10 years' time. More than half of respondents say that it will 'definitely' be more important in Malta (68%), Cyprus (54%) and Ireland (53%).

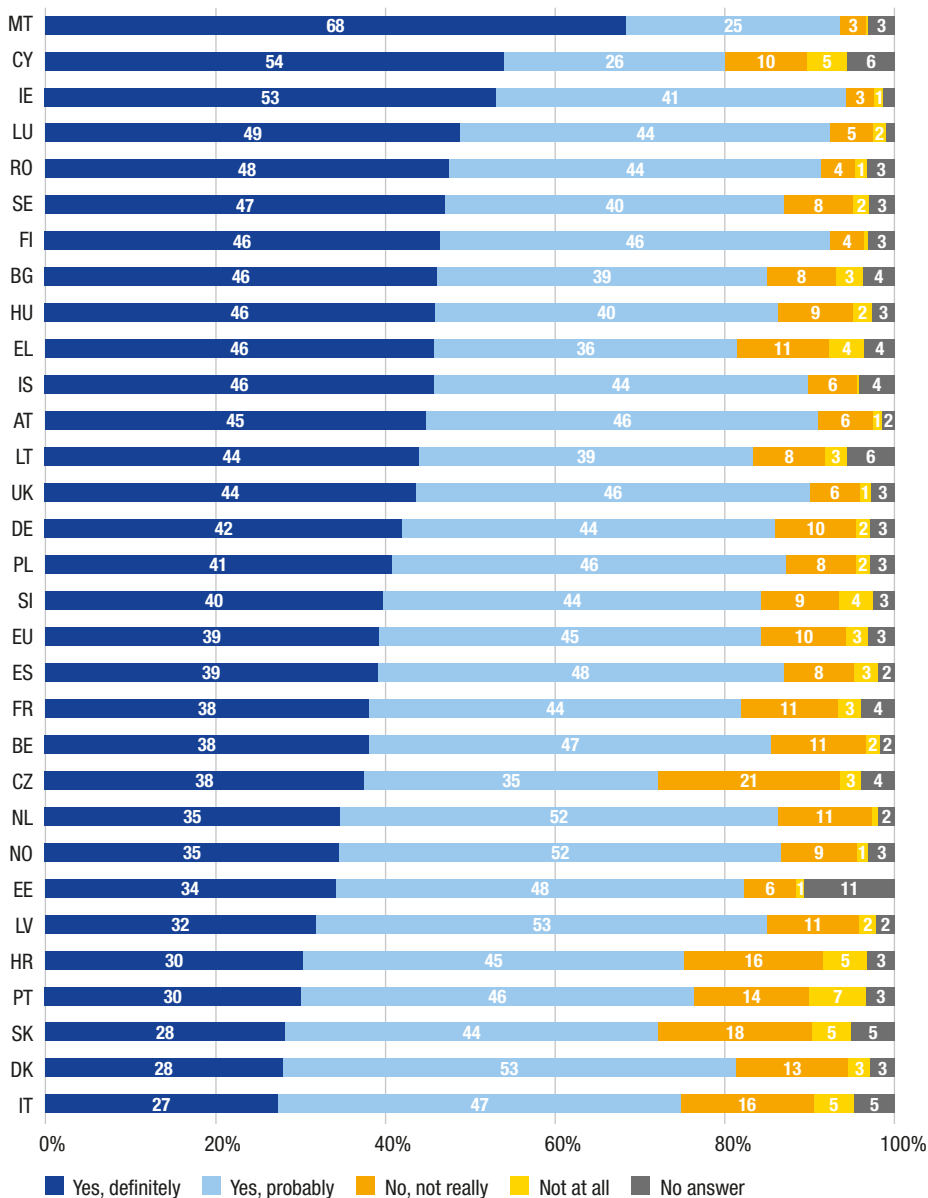
Figure 1. Importance: learning throughout life is important, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Figure 2. Importance: adult learning and career progression, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

Q1500 - Adult learning will be more important in ten years (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

The highest proportions of respondents who are not convinced of the increasing importance of adult learning and CVET are in Czechia (24%), Slovakia (23%), Croatia, Italy and Portugal (all 21%).

Some 89% of respondents 'totally agree' or 'agree' (55% totally agree; 34% agree) that governments should prioritise investment in learning for adults (Figure 3). In every country, at least two-thirds of respondents agree their government should prioritise investment in learning for adults. The highest numbers of those who 'totally agree' are in Malta (79%), Romania (75%), Greece and Cyprus (both 72%). Respondents in Iceland (27%) and Estonia (24%) are most likely to disagree.

## 2.2. Why adults learn

Across the EU-28 Member States, given the option of multiple answers, the two most common reasons respondents gave for taking part in organised training (Table 1) are personal development (66%) and to improve job skills (64%).

Respondents also mention improving basic skills (34%) and computer skills (20%). Sometimes respondents link improving job skills with specific work-related reasons such as promotion or better pay (16%), a new or different job (14%) or to set up a business (6%). Some 22% participated because the training was mandatory.

Respondents in Czechia (83%) are most likely to give personal development as the main reason for taking part in organised training, followed by Belgium (81%), Germany (77%) and the UK (75%). Improving job skills is the main reason given in Luxembourg, Iceland (both 75%), France (67%) and Bulgaria (65%). Improving basic skills is important in Belgium (53%), Denmark (52%), Iceland (50%), Austria (48%) and Luxembourg (47%).

A relatively high proportion of respondents participated in organised training activities in the UK (33%, compared to the European average of 22%) and Norway (28%) because it was mandatory. Greece (7%) has fewest respondents saying that they participated in an organised training activity because it was mandatory.

When given the option of multiple answers, personal development (81%) was also the most common reason respondents in the EU-28 Member States gave for participating in informal learning (learning on their own), followed by improving job skills (49%), basic skills (35%) and computer skills (21%) (Table 2). Most respondents gave personal development as the main reason in every country, notably in Czechia (91%), Belgium (89%), Luxembourg (88%) and Germany and the Netherlands (both 87%).

Table 1. **Importance: reasons for taking part in organised training, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q1811 Q1821	For personal development (12)	To improve your job skills (11)	To improve your basic skills (13)	It was mandatory (18)
<b>EU-28</b>	66	64	34	22
<b>BE</b>	81	70	53	21
<b>BG</b>	53	65	30	14
<b>CZ</b>	83	75	34	20
<b>DK</b>	55	69	52	29
<b>DE</b>	77	76	42	19
<b>EE</b>	48	60	14	13
<b>IE</b>	70	68	41	31
<b>EL</b>	60	57	28	7
<b>ES</b>	68	58	43	14
<b>FR</b>	59	67	32	24
<b>HR</b>	55	49	25	20
<b>IT</b>	51	49	23	21
<b>CY</b>	45	45	30	16
<b>LV</b>	55	61	26	19
<b>LT</b>	49	48	12	20
<b>LU</b>	69	75	47	27
<b>HU</b>	51	60	19	26
<b>MT</b>	41	43	31	17
<b>NL</b>	70	68	28	26
<b>AT</b>	73	72	48	15
<b>PL</b>	65	61	24	18
<b>PT</b>	62	72	41	15
<b>RO</b>	42	70	27	17
<b>SI</b>	67	51	38	22
<b>SK</b>	44	44	18	26
<b>FI</b>	62	62	19	16
<b>SE</b>	63	61	29	23
<b>UK</b>	75	63	34	33
<b>IS</b>	64	75	50	21
<b>NO</b>	51	56	37	28

Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

To improve your computer skills (14)	To get promotion or better pay (15)	To get a new or different job (16)	To set up a business (17)
20	16	14	6
30	15	16	6
18	21	11	6
29	22	19	5
9	11	15	4
24	23	16	7
7	6	7	2
28	24	16	7
20	10	13	5
28	11	16	6
20	12	14	6
19	14	12	7
9	3	6	2
12	9	9	4
14	15	13	7
8	8	5	3
27	18	14	8
11	14	10	5
14	20	11	2
13	13	15	4
23	23	15	11
19	21	12	4
24	13	10	2
31	22	12	8
20	18	11	4
14	13	11	4
14	6	14	3
12	12	9	2
17	21	18	8
27	15	11	5
13	9	11	5

Table 2. **Importance: reasons for taking part in informal training, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q1851 Q1860	For personal development (02)	To improve your job skills (01)	To improve your basic skills (03)
EU-28	81	49	35
BE	89	53	47
BG	74	45	28
CZ	91	61	40
DK	68	55	55
DE	87	59	44
EE	72	44	13
IE	83	52	36
EL	76	43	26
ES	80	45	44
FR	83	48	34
HR	73	43	26
IT	72	29	24
CY	53	42	27
LV	75	46	24
LT	74	38	9
LU	88	52	51
HU	76	38	23
MT	51	32	33
NL	87	53	30
AT	77	58	50
PL	82	47	26
PT	74	62	43
RO	61	60	31
SI	79	44	39
SK	66	39	25
FI	78	48	29
SE	82	43	31
UK	85	46	33
IS	77	67	55
NO	65	46	42

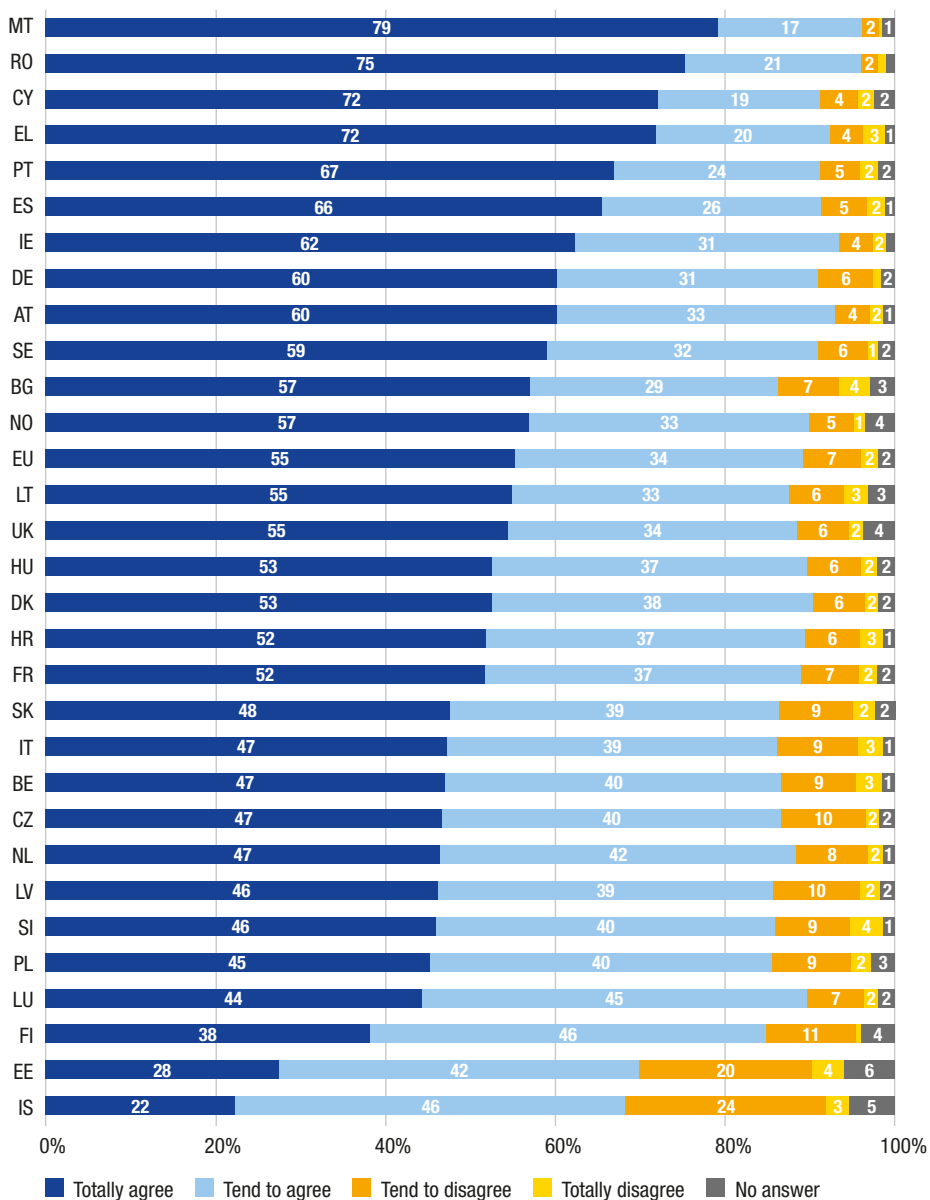
Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.



To improve your computer skills (04)	To get a promotion or better pay (05)	To get a new or different job (06)	To set up a business (07)
21	11	11	6
32	10	13	8
18	13	8	4
29	17	16	5
13	8	11	6
26	14	12	5
9	5	6	5
27	16	14	11
18	8	10	5
29	9	14	6
21	8	11	7
17	12	9	10
8	1	4	2
16	9	7	6
15	10	10	7
7	6	6	6
29	14	12	6
15	9	7	3
10	12	8	1
17	9	11	6
23	13	10	10
20	15	10	5
24	10	10	4
33	15	12	8
23	12	10	5
17	9	10	5
15	4	14	3
14	8	6	3
16	16	16	9
27	9	10	6
18	5	8	7

Figure 3. Importance: governments should prioritise investment in adult learning and CVET, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

Q0907 - The government should prioritise investment in adult learning (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Respondents in Iceland (67%) are most likely to say that they took part in learning on their own to improve their job skills, followed by Portugal (62%), Czechia (61%) and Romania (60%). Less than a third of respondents give this reason in Italy (29%) and Malta (32%).

At least half of respondents took part in learning on their own to improve their basic skills in Denmark and Iceland (both 55%), Luxembourg (51%) and Austria (50%). In contrast, few respondents in Lithuania (9%) and Estonia (13%) give this reason.

### 2.2.1. Changing needs: job-related skills

Although personal development is the main reason for taking part in organised learning and learning on one's own, the survey also gives insights into the importance of job-related learning to keep skills up to date (Figure 4).

Significantly, 88% of all respondents who were in work at the time of the survey agree that their job requires them to keep their skills constantly up to date, including 63% who totally agree.

Respondents in Sweden and Norway (both 80%) are most likely to totally agree that their job requires them to keep their skills constantly up to date, followed by Czechia and Malta (both 73%), Slovenia (72%), Hungary (71%) and Germany and Estonia (both 70%). The highest level of disagreement is in Cyprus (18%) and Estonia and Slovakia (both 17%). Further, 28% of all respondents in work agree that they lack some technical skills to carry out their job at the required level, including 9% who totally agree (Figure 5).

Portugal is the only country where respondents are more likely to agree (51%) than disagree (47%) that they lack some technical skills to carry out their job. However, a significant proportion of respondents agree that they lack required technical skills in Greece (47%), Cyprus (46%), Luxembourg (45%), Romania (43%) and Bulgaria (42%).

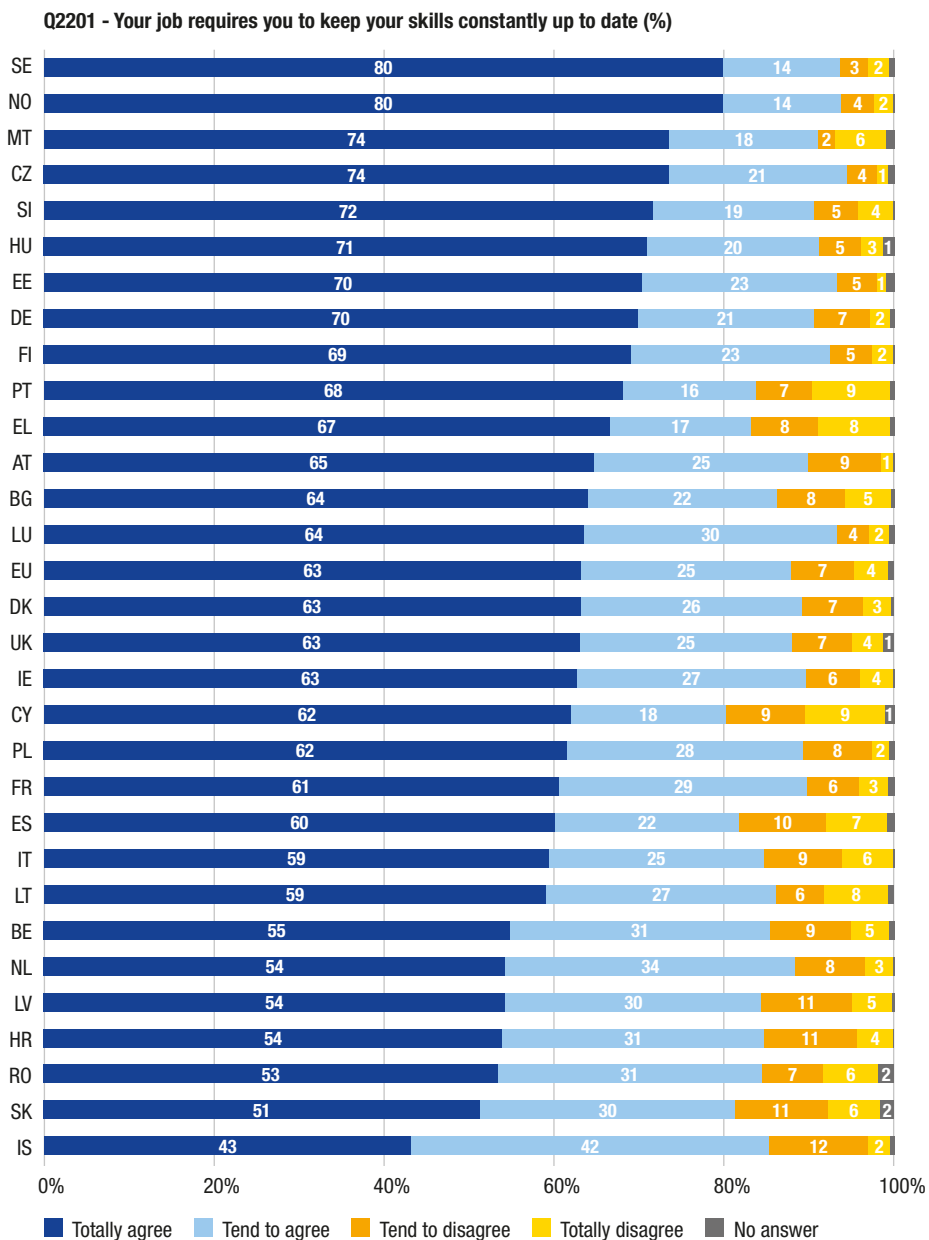
In contrast, most respondents disagree that they lack required technical skills in Italy (92%), Iceland (88%), Finland (85%) and Slovenia (84%).

Some 22% of respondents in work agree that they lack some general skills to carry out their job at the required level, including 8% who totally agree (Figure 6).

Portugal is again the only country where respondents are more likely to agree (52%) than disagree (47%) that they lack general skills, followed by Spain (43%), Cyprus and Luxembourg (both 40%).

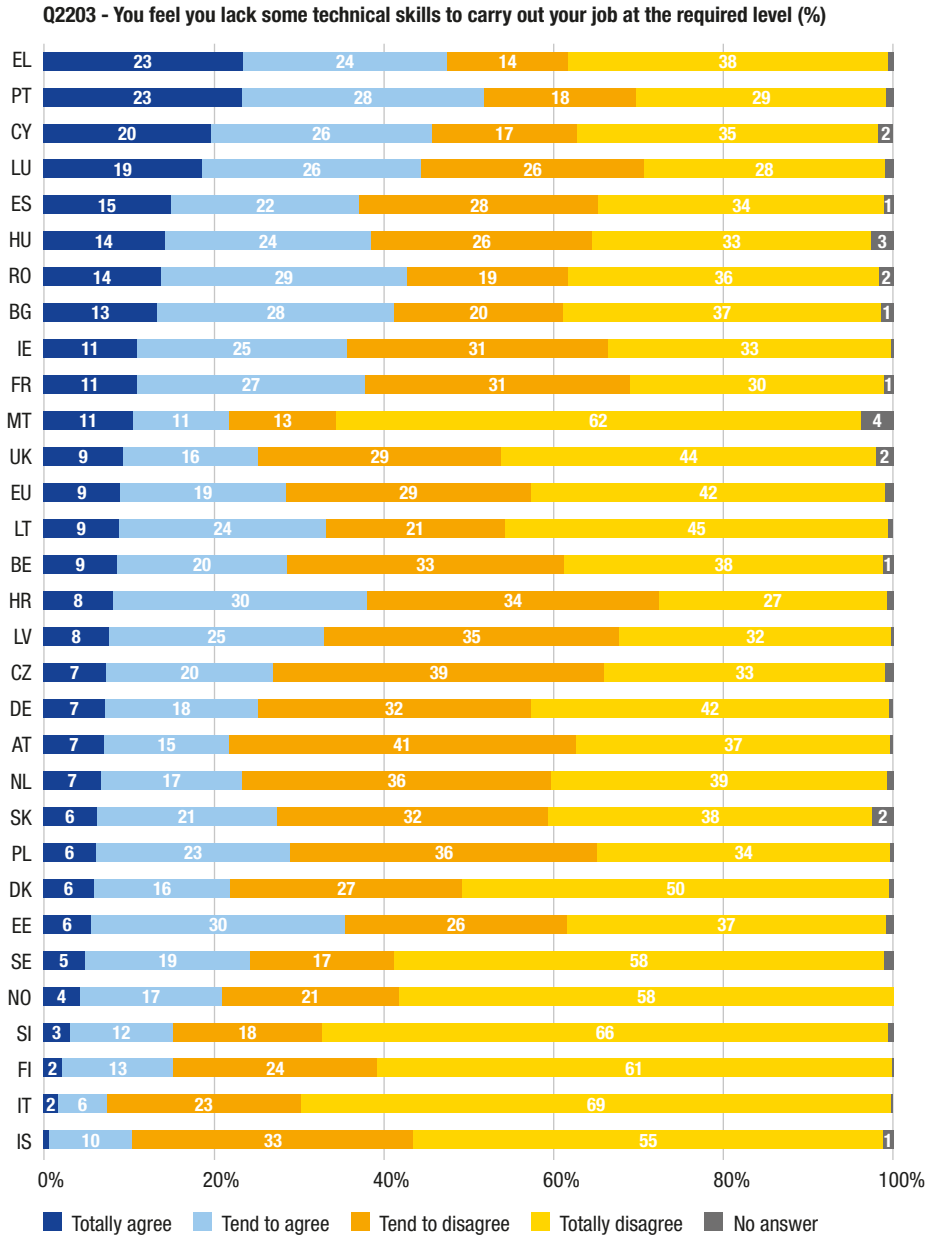
Respondents are most likely to disagree that they lack required general skills in Finland (91%), Iceland (91%), Italy (88%), Germany (84%), Poland (82%) and Norway and Sweden (both 81%).

Figure 4. Importance: job requirements - keeping skills up to date, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

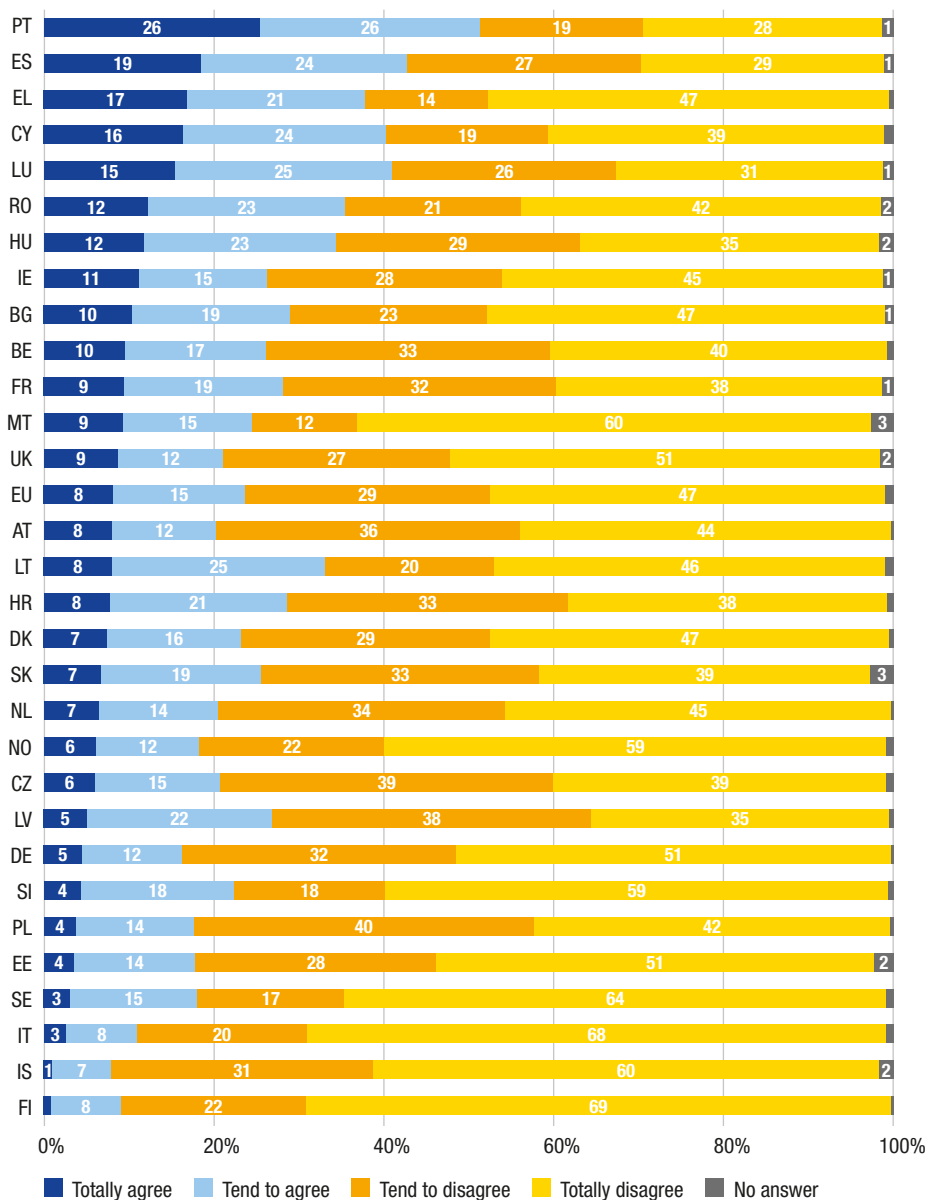
Figure 5. Importance: lack of technical skills, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Figure 6. Importance: lack of general skills, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

Q2204 - You feel you lack some general skills to carry out your job at the required level (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.