



SPOTLIGHT ON JOBS AND SKILLS POLAND

2025

Introduction

Drawing on its rich country-level skills intelligence, Cedefop develops its Spotlights on jobs and skills for EU-27 Member States, Iceland and Norway. The Spotlights provide insights into the current labour market landscape, future trends, and skills anticipation in each country. The analysis is based on Cedefop's skills intelligence online tool, its skills forecast, the European Skills Index (ESI), online job advertisements, sectoral and occupational skills intelligence, and country-specific skills anticipation reports.

Recent employment developments

While mining represents only a small share of national employment, coal mining has been the main employer in regions such as Silesia. The decarbonisation of those regions will further reduce mining employment, while simultaneously creating new jobs in the green economy. EU funding supports the local workforce, infrastructure development and administration ⁽¹⁾. Regional labour market observatories play a key role in identifying job opportunities and informing local populations about upskilling options. In 2022, almost two-thirds of workers in Poland held medium-level qualifications, while 38% were highly skilled. One in four highly skilled young workers (25-34) was overqualified, highlighting mismatches and underutilised potential in the labour market.

Between 2017 and 2022, female labour market participation rose significantly in Poland. In contrast, male labour market participation increased only marginally below the EU average. Women now make up almost half of the employed population, closely aligning with the EU average of 46%. Poland stands out due to its high female representation in roles such as legal and social associate professionals, customer service clerks, and hospitality and retail managers. Just

over one-quarter of employees are aged 50 or older, compared to the EU's 34% average. The ageing population and labour force is driving the demand for care workers, but only 39% of them are employed in the health and care sector – the lowest share among EU countries.

The relatively low share of 15- to 24-year-olds in employment (6% versus 8% in the EU-27) reflects educational expansion, with more young people pursuing and graduating from tertiary education. However, in 2022, 8% of the this age group were neither in employment nor education or training (NEETs) ⁽²⁾. While below the 9% EU average, activating NEETs should remain a priority in Poland's skills strategies.

Poland has welcomed the second-highest number of Ukrainian refugees since the Russian invasion ⁽³⁾. Training support and validation processes have helped upskill these refugees, assess their basic skills, and facilitate their labour market entry ⁽⁴⁾.

Recent skills and learning developments

Cedefop analysis of online job advertisements (OJAs) highlights the growing demand for highly skilled jobs in the country, aligning with forecasted skills upgrading trends up to 2035. In 2023, business services – particularly highly skilled professionals – had the highest shares of online job ads in the Polish labour market.

The high number of OJAs for occupations linked to manufacturing and the high-tech economy, such as metal and machinery workers, signals technological advancement. However, weak demand for ICT professionals and technicians in sectors such as energy supply, agriculture, manufacturing, construction, and water and waste treatment suggests slow digitalisation processes, hindering innovation and decarbonisation.

Poland has maintained above-EU-average skills system performance in the past decade, according to **Cedefop's European Skills Index** (ESI). Its overall ranking improved from 13th place in

⁽¹⁾ See [EIT Climate-KIC and Silesian Metropolis: joining forces to transform Europe's largest coal region](#) and [The difficult transformation of Poland's coal region](#).

⁽²⁾ In Poland, children and teenagers are subject to compulsory schooling and education up to the age of 18.

⁽³⁾ See [Temporary protection for persons fleeing Ukraine – monthly statistics: where in the EU did people fleeing Ukraine go](#).

⁽⁴⁾ [Poland: upskilling pathways for adults with low basic skills](#).

2017 to 9th in 2024. In 2024, Poland ranked third in skills matching but scored lower than most EU countries in the skills activation (20th) and skills development (17th) pillars. There is significant potential to expand training provision and to improve education-to-work transitions.

Despite progress, Poland trails in digital skills, with only one in five people having advanced skills. The share of the workforce with above-basic digital skills (26%) is well below the EU-average. Even among the younger generation (aged 25-34), only 35% exceed the basic digital skills threshold. Targeted training efforts, including the 120 sectoral skills centres (SSCs) ⁽⁵⁾ under the Ministry of National Education, are needed to power digitalisation across economic sectors, and unlock the country's potential to shape the twin transition.

Training participation in Poland remains low: only 9% of the employed population engaged in education or training in 2023, compared to 13% in the EU. Gender and age gaps are also more pronounced than in the EU ⁽⁶⁾. Reliable skills intelligence can help expand training provision. In recent years Poland has taken significant steps to expand skills anticipation approaches and use skills intelligence to inform upskilling, such as broader stakeholder engagement, and update/development of examination tasks in VET qualifications ⁽⁷⁾ related to environmental protection. Incorporating 'green' elements into skills anticipation methods will further amplify these initiatives.

Future employment trends

Until 2035, employment in Poland is expected to grow at around the same rate as the EU-27 average. In the pharmaceuticals, architectural & engineering and optical & electronic equipment sectors employment growth will be highest. Most occupations with employment growth will require high skills, as is the case for legal, social & other related professionals, CEOs, and ICT professionals. Population ageing will drive employment growth for

health professionals.

Companies looking for professionals (35%), technicians and associate professionals (19%), and craft and related trade workers (18%) are expected to generate most job openings (employment growth and replacement demand) over the forecast period. The occupations with most job openings are health professionals (12%), building and related trades workers (excluding electricians) (11%), and drivers and mobile plant operators (8%).

The Polish economy is forecast to see a sharp employment decline in the Primary sector (-33% until 2035), while employment in business and other services will grow substantially (+25%) this decade. Employment in advanced manufacturing will slightly decline, with the motor vehicles sector expecting a fall of 3%.

While the population is forecast to decline by 1% between 2020 and 2035, the labour force is foreseen to grow by 5% during the same period. Previous trends in younger cohort participation rates indicate a strong decline for those aged 20-44 and 60-64, while growth is forecast for the 45-59 and 65+ cohorts. The Female participation rate is projected to increase by four percentage points.

Future skills and learning trends

Highly skilled occupations will remain a key driver of Poland's labour market dynamics, accounting for nearly two-thirds (64%) of all job openings by 2035 – about 5 percentage points above the EU-27 average. More than one-third (36%) of total job openings in the country will require medium-level qualifications.

The share of the labour force with high-level qualifications will remain slightly above the EU-27 average, whereas the share of low-skilled workers will stay below it. More than half of the population will hold medium-level qualifications, but the share with high-level qualifications will grow faster, reaching 47% in 2035.

Considering the tasks of an occupation, rather than just the skills level, provides better insights

⁽⁵⁾ See [Nationwide network of industry skills centres for 2023–2028 - announcement of the Minister of Education \[in Polish\]](#), and [Timeline of VET policies in Europe: Sectoral skills centres \(SSCs\) in Poland](#).

⁽⁶⁾ One in 10 of those trained were females, while 15% in EU-27; and 6% of 50- to 64-year-old employees (almost half the 11% EU average).

⁽⁷⁾ [Sępnikowski, A. \(2024\). Greening apprenticeships: Poland. Cedefop community of apprenticeship experts](#). National news on VET.

into linked technological advancements and innovation. Between 2022 and 2035, employment growth in high-tech occupations is projected at 29%, well above the EU average of 15%. Sectoral and occupational trends during this period indicate an increased focus on knowledge-intensive services in Poland, with a 31% growth forecast – significantly higher than the EU's 18%. Poland's high-tech manufacturing, however, is expected to lag (4% employment growth versus 5% in the EU), despite the sector's critical role in the country. Skills-relevant policies could help accelerate growth in this sector.

Expected skill shortages

According to [Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index](#), the highest level of labour shortage – resulting in hiring difficulties – is expected among high-skilled and elementary occupations. In-demand occupations, such as health professionals and chief executives are forecast to face the highest shortages.

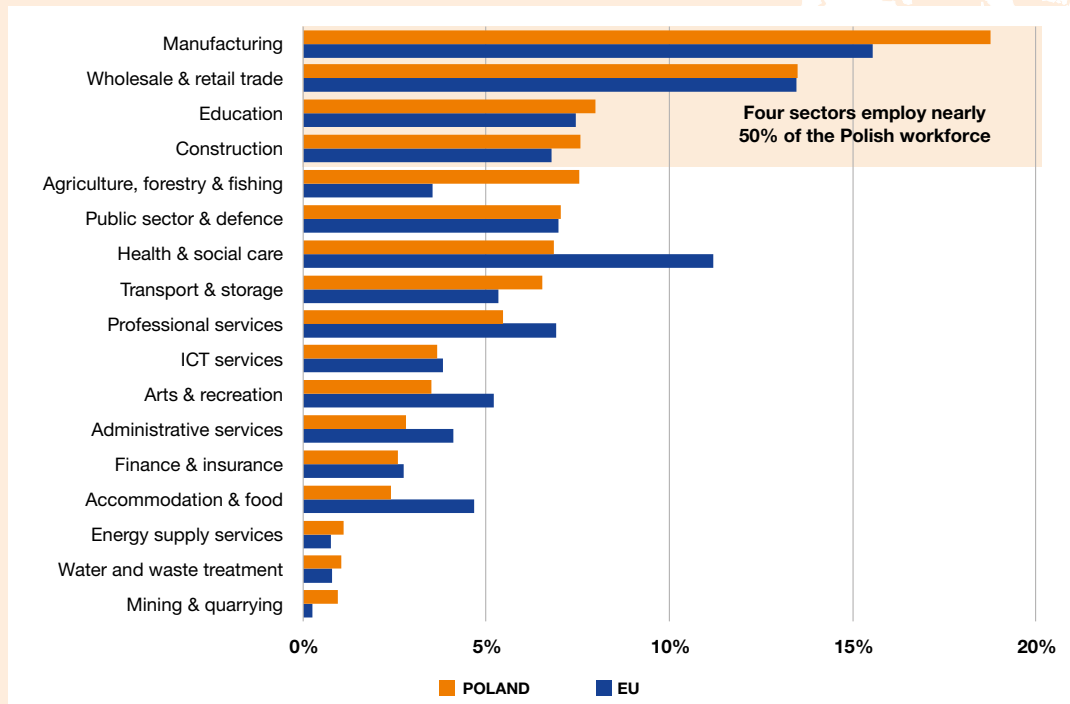
Shortages are also expected for building and related trades workers, one of the occupations with the highest expected employment growth. While current supply-demand imbalances remain moderate, significant employment growth and replacement demand could create bottlenecks.



POLAND

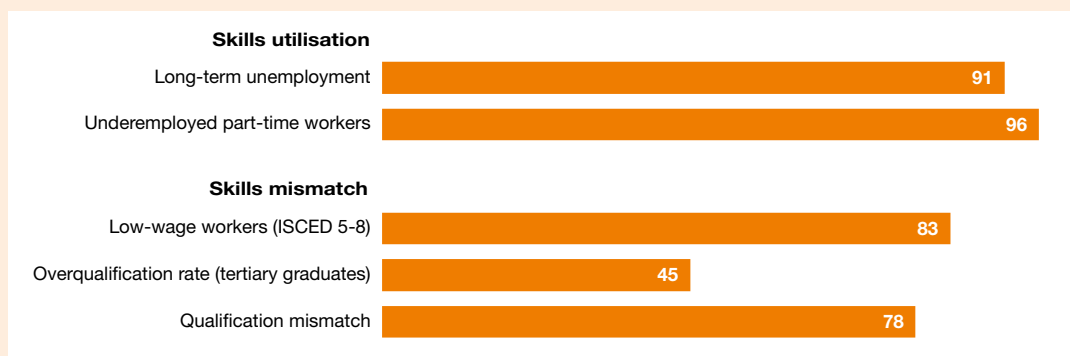
Jobs and skills in figures

Distribution of employment across sectors in Poland and in the EU, 2023, (%)



Source: Cedefop Skills intelligence tool.

Highest-ranking pillar for Poland, Cedefop European Skills Index



NB: The ESI measures countries' 'distance to the ideal' performance, i.e. the highest achieved by any country over a period of seven years. The ideal performance is scaled to 100, with national scores computed and compared to that. Example: a score of 65 suggests that the country has reached 65% of the ideal performance, with 35% (100-65) room for improvement.

Source: Cedefop ESI.

Cedefop Labour Shortage Index, 2022-35, Poland



NB: The Labour Shortage Index is the simple average of the quartiles in each of the three pillars: (1) employment growth; (2) replacement demand; (3) supply/demand imbalance (FIOD). A score of 4 indicates a higher level of shortage, and 1 no shortage. The outcome of the pillars is based on the relative evaluation in quartiles of the occupation (here for all EU-27).

Source: Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index.



Further information

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Cedefop Skills intelligence tool

Cedefop Skills forecast

Cedefop Skills OVATE

Cedefop European Skills Index

Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index

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