EN

SPOTLIGHT
ON JOBS AND SKILLS
CZECHIA

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

In 2023, the unemployment rate in Czechia (3%) was the lowest in the EU. Education levels strongly influence unemployment rates, with lower-qualified people much more likely to be affected than highly qualified people (11% compared with 1%). There are no significant differences in the unemployment rate by gender or between age groups, particularly for people with a medium- or high-level qualification. Czechia has the lowest unemployment rates for clerks (1%) and service and sales workers (2%) in the EU. The long-term unemployment rate in 2023 was lower than in most other EU countries and below the EU average (24% compared with 35%).

Manufacturing remains the backbone of the economy, employing about a quarter of the workforce in 2023, one of the highest shares in the EU. The automotive industry accounts for a significant share of employment in manufacturing. Czechia's high-tech economy is apparent from the large share of employment in high-tech manufacturing (11%), which is well above the EU average (5%). Non-marketed services, the distribution and transport sector, and business services (Figure 1) are also important employers. Czechia has the highest share of trade workers in the EU (16%). Close to one in three is a metal and machinery worker, and most work in manufacturing.

In 2023, Czechia had the largest share of medium-skilled workers in manufacturing in the EU (81% compared to the EU average of 54%), but the lowest share of high-skilled employment (13% compared to the EU average of 28%). Medium-skilled workers also accounted for some of the highest employment shares in other sectors. Across sectors [1], the employment share of technical science graduates is higher than in other EU countries. They work mostly as operators and assemblers (65% hold a technical qualification) and trade workers (84%), but also as managers (38%), and associate professionals (33%).

More men than women were employed in 2023 (44% women, 56% men), with gender shares remaining stable over the past decade. Women's representation among business managers and ICT technicians and professionals was among the lowest in the EU. Compared with other EU countries, women are among the most likely to work as accounting clerks.

About three in five employed people are under 50, while those over 65 make up 3% of the labour force, as in many other Member States. In 2023, the share of Czech 15- to 24-year-olds neither in employment nor education or training (NEETs) was 6%, significantly below the EU average and it dropped by 1 percentage point from the previous year. The NEET rate had increased during 2018-2022, eroding the progress made in reducing NEETs by nearly half in 2013-2018. The NEET rate among women is more than double that of men, signalling the need for targeted policy intervention.

Recent skills and learning developments

In 2023, more than two-thirds of workers held medium-level qualifications, 26% were highly qualified, and only 5% had no or low qualifications. The employment share of the highly qualified is among the lowest in the EU. The share of people aged 25-34 with tertiary educational attainment is also comparatively low (around 33% in 2023 and 2024). Czechia reduced its overqualification rate from 18% to 13%, well below the EU average of 23%, reversing the earlier upward trend. In 2023

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[1] To learn more about the classification of sectors, occupations, and qualification levels discussed in this report, see Annex 2 of the Cedefop skills forecast methodological framework (April 2023).

and 2024, the overeducation rate among young female graduates (aged 25-34) was significantly higher (41%) than for their male counterparts (27%).

Cedefop's analysis of online job advertisements (OJAs) underlines the critical importance of attracting well-trained people to highly skilled jobs, in line with forecast skills upgrading trends up to 2035. In 2023, most OJAs were for business service job openings. Czechia has some of the highest market shares of OJAs for machine and plant operators, science and engineering technicians, and metal and machinery workers in the EU; these signal continued strong demand for skilled workers in manufacturing and other high-tech sectors. One in three professional jobs advertised online in 2023 was for an ICT professional. Employers primarily look for software and application developers (88% of OJAs for ICT professionals) and database and network professionals (12%).

From 2017 to 2024, Czechia ranked first out of 31 countries in the European Skills Index (ESI). This was mainly driven by effective skills and labour market matching (Figure 2). The favourable situation in the labour market, a low unemployment rate, a relatively low share of highly qualified workers, and the high share of vocational education and training learners contribute to the performance of the skills formation system.

Czechia has the lowest percentage of highly educated workers in low-wage jobs and the lowest percentage of underqualified or overqualified workers among EU countries. These positive skills system outcomes reflect a wide range of policy initiatives that improve the match between skill supply and demand. Examples include stronger stakeholder involvement in anticipating skill needs and the set-up of vocational education and training (VET) in recent years. Nonetheless, study programmes need to be modernised to develop 21st-century skills [2] needed for employment and to ease the transition to a new, higher value-added economic model.

According to the ESI, Czechia lags behind in the labour market participation of 20- to 24-year-olds (24th), and in advanced digital skills (23rd). In 2023, 35% of the population had high digital skills, far below the 54% of 25- to 34-year-olds.

Training participation (11%) was below the EU average (14%) in 2023, with older age cohorts participating less (10%) than younger ones (10% for 50- to 64-year-olds versus 13% for 25- to 49-year-olds). After the 2018-2021 recession, participation in learning rose significantly in 2023, reaching pre-recession levels last seen in 2017. Significant efforts are under way to encourage learning and better align VET with labour market needs.

Future employment trends

Employment is expected to grow slightly more slowly than forecast for the EU until 2035. Low unemployment is likely to limit the potential for significant additional job creation. Czechia is projected to maintain the highest employment share in manufacturing in the EU (25%) by 2035. Employment in high-skilled occupations, such as ICT professionals and science and engineering professionals, is projected to grow fastest. While the total volume of employment is expected to shrink for technicians and associate professionals, there will still be ample job opportunities across the board due to workforce ageing, and replacement demand will be high in all occupations.

The ageing population will also require more health and care services, resulting in growing employment for personal care workers, health professionals, and health associate professionals. Skills upgrading will continue in these occupations, particularly for health associate professionals, who will increasingly need higher qualifications.

Digitalisation and the shift to services will drive most job openings. These will often be for professionals (33% of job openings), particularly ICT professionals, as well as for service and shop and market sales workers (18% of job openings). The occupations with the most job openings until 2035 are drivers and mobile plant operators, and personal service workers (8% each). Net employment for business and administration associate professionals will see the largest decline, but job openings will remain positive thanks to

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[2] Kaňáková, M. (2024). *Implementing European priorities in VET: making national VET agile, flexible, innovative, attractive, inclusive and quality-assured: Czechia.* Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives.

significant replacement demand, as is the case for most occupations with declining employment.

The population aged 25-49 is forecast to decline between 2020 and 2035, as smaller and younger cohorts move up the age pyramid over time. Labour market participation in Czechia is expected to increase for all age cohorts until 2035, except for the 45-49 cohort. With participation rates for those over 35 already higher than the EU average, scope for growth will be modest. The 60-64 age group is an exception, with participation rates projected to rise by 20%.

Future skills and learning trends

By 2035, the share of workers with medium-level qualifications (63%) will be among the highest in the EU, despite the slight decrease of 3% since 2022. The share of people with high-level qualifications is expected to rise to 33% in 2035 but will remain among the lowest in the EU.

In contrast to labour market trends in many other EU countries, job openings in Czechia are far more concentrated on medium-level qualifications, and there are fewer openings requiring academic or higher VET qualifications. Around half of job openings will require medium-level qualifications, and many will replace people exiting the labour market or changing jobs. About 46% of job openings will require high-level qualifications, and only 3% will require no or low-level qualifications.

Employment in high-tech occupations is projected to grow to 20% in Czechia, surpassing the EU average (15%). Employment in knowledge-intensive services such as education, finance and insurance in Czechia is expected to grow by 20% over 2022-2035, outpacing the corresponding EU growth rate (18%). In 2035, 67% of employment in ICT services will be in high-tech occupations; this expected share will be significantly higher than the EU average (56%), reflecting the rapid digital transition in the country. The employment share of high-tech occupations is expected to be particularly high in energy supply services (34%) and professional services (25%).

Expected skill shortages

According to *Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index*, hiring difficulties will be severe for high-skilled occupations, primarily because of existing supply-demand imbalances. The shortages are expected to be most severe for science and engineering professionals, health professionals, and legal, social and cultural professionals` (Figure 3).
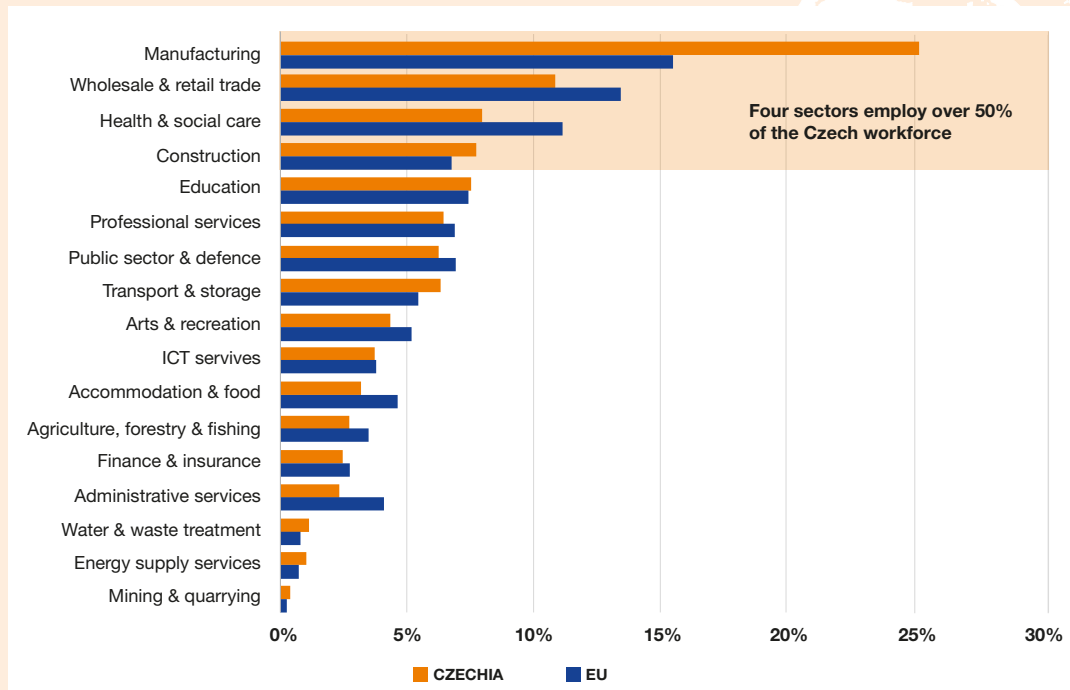
Skilled non-manual and skilled manual occupations mainly employ medium- and low-skilled workers. Shortages in these occupations will primarily be driven by replacement demand, which is particularly high for personal service workers, personal care workers and food preparation assistants.
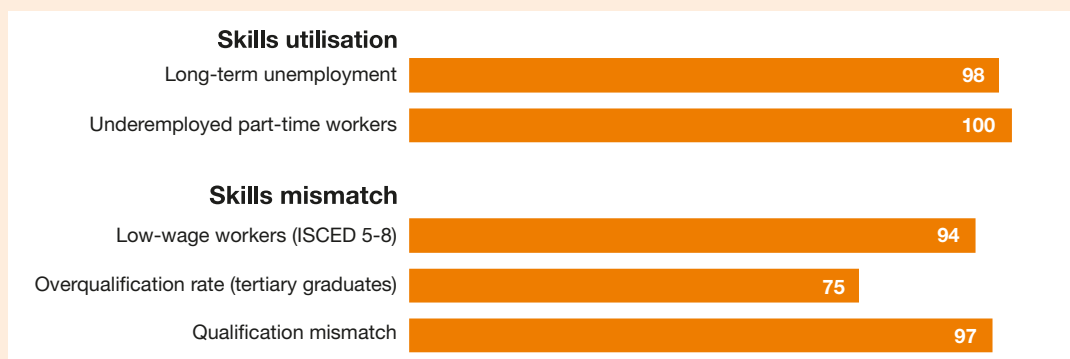
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Jobs and skills in figures

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

Four sectors employ over 50% of the Czech workforce

- Manufacturing
- Wholesale & retail trade
- Health & social care
- Construction
- Education
- Professional services
- Public sector & defence
- Transport & storage
- Arts & recreation
- ICT servives
- Accommodation & food
- Agriculture, forestry & fishing
- Finance & insurance
- Administrative services
- Water & waste treatment
- Energy supply services
- Mining & quarrying

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Source: Cedefop skills intelligence tool.

ESI skills matching pillar in Czechia, 2024

Skills utilisation
- Long-term unemployment: 98
- Underemployed part-time workers: 100

Skills mismatch
- Low-wage workers (ISCED 5-8): 94
- Overqualification rate (tertiary graduates): 75
- Qualification mismatch: 97

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 and Skills Shortage Index, Czechia, 2022-35

- Professionals
- Service workers and shop and market sales workers
- Elementary occupations
- Legislators, senior officials and managers
- Technicians and associate professionals
- Craft and related trades workers
- Plant and machine operators and assemblers
- Clerks
- Skilled agricultural and fishery workers
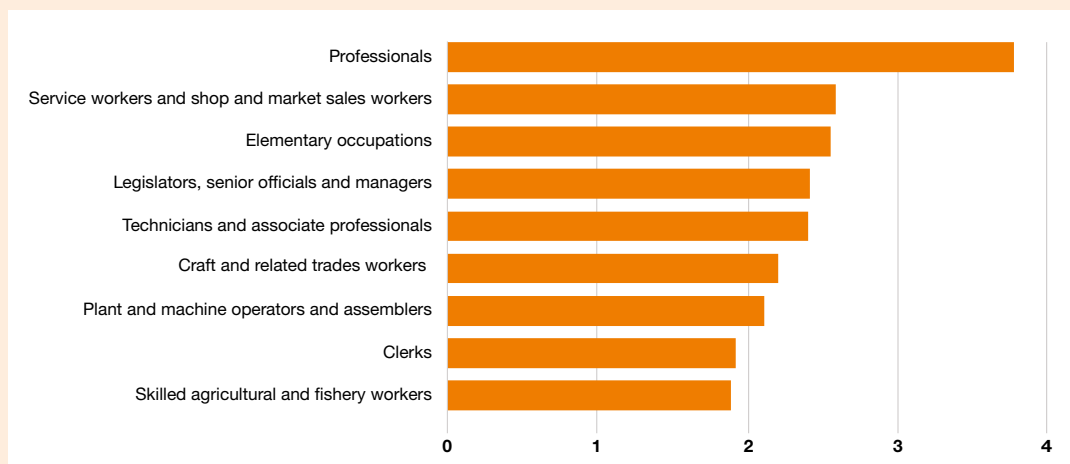
NB: The Labour Shortage Index is the simple average of the quartiles in each of the three pillars: (1) employment growth; (2) replacement demand; (3) supply/demand imbalance (IFIOD). A score of 4 indicates a higher level of shortage, and 1 no shortage. The outcome of the pillars is based on the relative evaluation in quantiles of the occupation (here for all EU-27).
Source: Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index.

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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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