

SPOTLIGHT ON JOBS AND SKILLS SLOVAKIA

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

Slovakia's unemployment rate in 2023 was on par with the EU average (6%). However, Slovakia had one of the highest unemployment rates for low-qualified adults at 37%, compared with the EU average of 12%. Long-term unemployment was also a major issue (65% versus 35% in EU-27), and 81% unemployed people had low qualifications (twice the EU average of 40%). Low-qualified people mainly come from marginalised communities. Policy interventions to improve early childhood education and care could ease these challenges and help more adults gain qualifications.

Manufacturing ⁽¹⁾ represented about a quarter of Slovakia's economy in 2023, and, with a share considerably above the EU average (22% versus 16%), remains a critical employer (Figure 1). Service and sales workers (17%), professionals (17%), and office associate professionals (16%) account for significant shares of employment. Among them, the proportion of professionals is below the EU average (17% versus 22%). Reflecting the strong role of manufacturing in Slovakia's economy, the shares of trades workers (14%) and operators and assemblers (12%) are slightly higher than the EU average. The share of employment in high-tech manufacturing in 2022 was significantly above the EU average (8% versus 5%).

In 2023, Slovakia had a low share of both low-skilled (3%) and high-skilled workers (32%) compared to the EU average (16% and 38% respectively). As a result, medium-skilled workers made up a dominant 65% of the workforce, one of the highest proportions among EU Member States. Overqualification rates remained higher than the EU average (28% versus 23%), with the gap continuously widening.

Overall male and female employment distribution was similar to the EU average in 2023, with slightly more men employed (47% versus 46% in the EU). Women were strongly represented in several sectors: they made up 74% of clerks (compared with 66% in the EU), 60% of professional services workers (compared to 49% in the EU), and 83% of education workers (compared with 73% in the EU). Women also had a higher share of jobs as operators and assemblers than the EU average (24% versus 18%). However, their representation in research and engineering was one of the lowest among Member States, at just 22% compared to 30% in the EU.

In 2023, 31% of Slovakia's workforce was aged 50 or older, slightly below the EU average of 35%, indicating an ageing labour force. Young workers (15-24) made up just 5% of the employed population – one of the lowest shares in the EU, where the average was 8%. The share of young people neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) was 9%, matching the EU average.

Recent skills and learning developments

[Cedefop's analysis of online job advertisements](#) (OJAs) highlights the critical importance of highly skilled jobs for the economy, mirroring projected skill trends for 2022-2035. In 2023, ICT professionals (8%), office associate professionals (8%), personal services workers (6%), and sales workers (7%) accounted for the largest shares of job advertisements. In line with Slovakia's strength in manufacturing, machine and plant operators (6%) and various technician roles such as science

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

and engineering technicians (5%) were also in demand, along with metal and machinery workers (4%).

According to Cedefop's [European Skills Index](#) (ESI), Slovakia's skills system is close to the EU average in 2024 (Figure 2). However, the country slipped three positions between 2017 to 2024, to 19th place in 2024. Slovakia ranked 12th in skills matching and 14th in skills development, with skills activation being the weakest pillar (26th). Indicators show improvements in recent training and in the employment of recent graduates. However, long-term unemployment and low-wage workers (ISCED 5-8) saw the largest declines. Taken together with recent employment trends, these results indicate significant scope to boost the labour market participation of young people (especially ages 20-24) and to increase support for early leavers from training.

Slovakia lags in digital skills, with only 26% of the employed population having above-basic digital skills in 2023, compared with 33% in the EU. The gap is even wider among young adults aged 25-34 (29% versus 39% in the EU-27).

In 2023, only 12% of Slovakia's employed population participated in education and training. This is slightly below the EU average of 14% but above the participation rate recorded in neighbouring central and eastern Europe countries. This drop follows a five-fold increase in participation after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Future employment trends

According to [Cedefop's skills forecast](#), manufacturing employment in Slovakia is expected to grow by nearly 1% annually from 2022 to 2035, maintaining its share of total employment. Business and other services, and the primary sector and utilities are also expected to grow, each at about 0.6% per year. Employment growth is expected to be highest in the electricity, ICT, and human health and social work sectors. In contrast, the projected change in skills demand shows a sharp fall in mining and quarrying, with similarly downward trends (although less sharp) in public administration, arts and recreation, and education.

In terms of occupations, the largest percentage

increases will be among administrative and commercial managers (58%), and ICT professionals (55%). A significant fall is expected for legal, social, cultural and related associate professionals (-44%). The occupations with the most job openings will be personal care workers, plant and machine operators, and health professionals.

Slovakia's labour force is expected to stagnate between 2022 and 2035, contrasting with 3% growth in the previous 15 years and the EU's projected 8% increase. Male labour force participation is expected to decline by 1%, while female participation is set to rise by 2%. The total population is projected to remain stable over the same period.

Future skills and learning trends

By 2035, demand for skilled employees expected to be significant, with more than half of all job openings requiring high-level qualifications. The demand for those with low-level qualifications is projected to shrink, indicating more opportunities for highly skilled workers. While the number of highly qualified workers is projected to grow by 20%, their overall share (33%) will remain lower than the EU average (45%). A similar trend is expected on the supply side, with a potential shortage of highly qualified adults to meet demand. Medium-qualified workers are expected to make up most of Slovakia's labour supply (59% versus 45% in the EU-27).

In line with demand for high-level qualifications, employment in high-tech occupations is expected to grow across ICT services, agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, and construction. Manufacturing will remain a key sector of Slovakia's economy up to 2035. Between 2022 and 2035, employment in high-tech occupations in manufacturing is expected to grow by 20% (12% in EU-27). Employment growth in high-tech manufacturing is significantly above the EU average (20% versus 5% in the EU-27). This indicates that Slovakia will make progress in closing the gap with the EU average in the share of employment in high-tech manufacturing. Despite population ageing, projected growth in high-tech

occupations in health and social care in Slovakia is significantly below the expected EU average.

Expected skill shortages

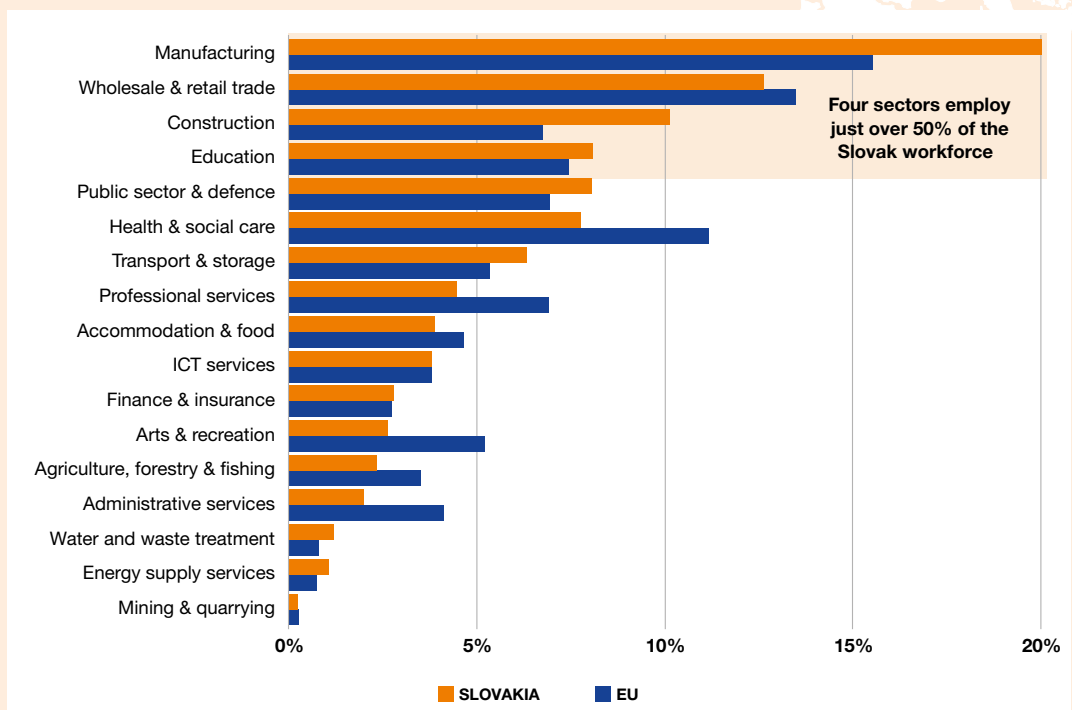
Based on Cedefop's Labour and Skills Shortage Index, Slovakia is expected to experience difficulties in hiring highly skilled workers while also facing an oversupply of low- and medium-skilled workers by 2035 (Figure 3). The most pronounced skills shortages are projected for professionals, and for legislators, senior officials and managers. The primary drivers are employment growth and high levels of supply-demand imbalances for these occupations. At the other end of the spectrum are craft and related trade workers, plant and machine operators, and assemblers, where relatively low replacement demand coincides with limited anticipated supply-demand imbalances.



SLOVAKIA

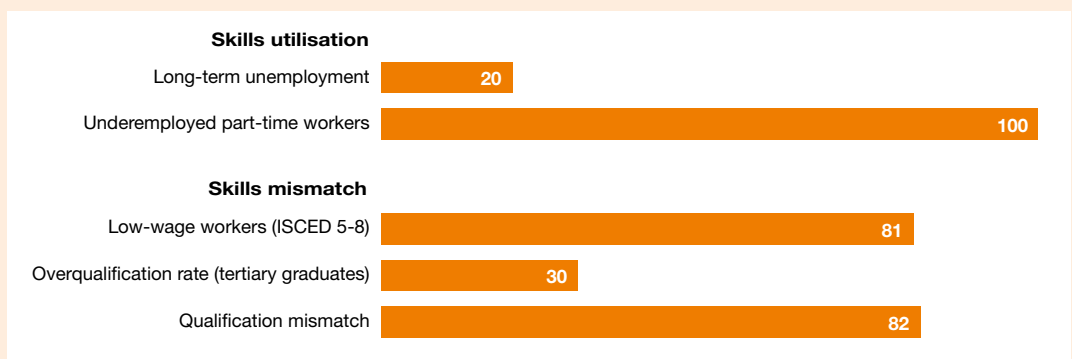
Jobs and skills in figures

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



Source: Cedefop skills intelligence tool.

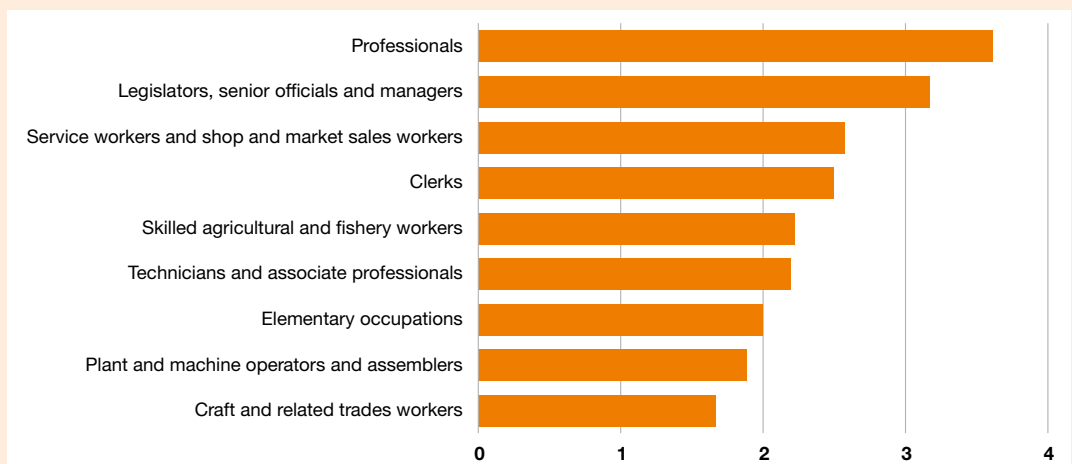
ESI skills matching pillar in Slovakia, 2024



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, 2022-35, Slovakia



NB: The Labour and Skills 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

- Cedefop. (2023). [Skills anticipation in Slovakia](#). Data insights series.
- Cedefop. (2023). [Skills forecast methodological framework](#).
- Cedefop (2024). [Evolution of European skills systems: performance 2015 to 2022](#). Publications Office of the European Union.
- Cedefop. (2024). [Vocational education and training policy briefs 2023 – Slovakia](#). Cedefop monitoring and analysis of vocational education and training policies.
- Cedefop. (2024). [Vocational education and training in Slovakia: short description](#). Publications Office of the European Union.
- Cedefop (2025). [Skills forecast report: Slovakia](#).
- Gállová et al. (2025). [European Skills Index 2024](#).

[Cedefop skills intelligence tool](#)

[Cedefop skills forecast](#)

[Cedefop Skills OVATE](#)

[Cedefop European Skills Index](#)

[Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index](#)

This Spotlight was drafted by Cedefop's Skills intelligence and foresight team. Cedefop would like to thank Juraj Vantuch and Dagmar Jelínková from the State Institute of VET (ReferNet Slovakia) and Ľuba Habodászová from the State Institute of VET for their valuable feedback. This Spotlight was validated by the National Representative of the Slovak ReferNet team, Karol Jakubík.



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylaia), Greece
Postal: Cedefop service post, 570 01 Thermi, Greece
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020, Email: info@cedefop.europa.eu



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