



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training



## Policies for matching better skills in better jobs

Cedefop Brussels-based Seminars  
23 June 2016, 9.30 – 13.00, Brussels, Belgium

### General information

<b>Organiser</b>	Cedefop
<b>In cooperation with</b>	The Netherlands Presidency of the Council of the EU
<b>Venue</b>	Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the EU 4 - 10 Avenue de Cortenbergh, 1040 Brussels
<b>Participants' profile</b>	Brussels based stakeholders, representatives of Member States, European Commission staff, Members of the European Parliament, business associations, trade and employee representatives
<b>Working language</b>	English

### Event rationale

The first in a series of Cedefop Brussels-based seminars, the discussion will focus on tackling skill mismatch – a key objective of the European Commission's New Skills Agenda for Europe.

Skill mismatch is **costly for individuals, enterprises and societies**. Cedefop's *European Skills and Jobs survey*, a survey of the skills match of about 49,000 adult employees, reveals that about 1 in 3 employees in the EU are affected by mismatches between their qualifications and those required by their job. About 4 in 10 workers also believe that their skills are not effectively used by their work. The economic downturn has made the situation worse as increasing numbers of highly-qualified individuals have been employed in lower-skilled jobs, some precarious or of low quality.

At the same time, even in developed economies where an increasing proportion of the workforce has a university degree, about 67 million Europeans **lack basic skills** and 1 in 5 enter into their jobs with skill gaps. About 12 million EU workers have been unemployed for more than one year, distancing their skills from what the job market needs. 4 in 10 employers in the EU claim that they have difficulty finding the talent they need. Evidence of higher wages received by more skilled employees indicates that there is a relative scarcity of the 'right' skills (e.g. digital skills, problem solving, communication) in advanced economies.

There are *many different types and forms of skill mismatch*, fostering confusion in the policy debate about the best policy mix needed to address the issue. *Skill mismatch is also dynamic and complex*. It affects individuals and enterprises not only during the transition from school or unemployment back to work but throughout adults' working lives. While the right skills are needed for individuals to step into the labour market, collective private and public policy support is needed to help adults 'stay the course'.

Policies to support skill development opportunities and employer commitment to training at work are crucial. But they are not enough. Mitigating skill mismatch requires a holistic and integrative approach to skills governance and the combination of different policy interventions and tools, including housing and social care policies, immigration policies, industrial policies, (local) economic development incentives and employment regulations that may foster labour market mobility. Improving the relevance and visibility of the skills of adults should also be a cornerstone of any skills policy package.

Evidence and fuller understanding of the whole policy mix (as indicated above) needed to tackle skill mismatch is still lacking, yet there is no doubt that skill mismatch is *an impediment to economic productivity*. Cedefop's evidence shows that 44% of EU adult workers have skills that are below the levels needed to attain the full productivity dividends in their jobs; while for 26% the potential value of their skills is grossly unexploited.

### Event objectives

The aim of this workshop is to share evidence about various forms of skill mismatch and stimulate debate about **key policy priorities, challenges and applicable solutions for different Member States** within the context of the European Commission's **New Skills Agenda for Europe**. Drawing on recent evidence collected as part of Cedefop's European skills and jobs survey the workshop will seek to address the need for comprehensive policy solutions that include yet extend beyond the traditional realm of education and training policies.

Participants will:

- Understand the costs of the many different forms of skill mismatch to jobseekers, employers and society;
- Assess the need for a wide range of skills policy instruments to be employed for addressing skill mismatch and for ensuring sustainable lifelong learning and training systems in the EU;
- Debate best practices, policy approaches and evidence in the field of skill mismatch from their respective national contexts;
- Discuss the policy options offered by the European Commission's New Skills Agenda for Europe.

Thursday 23 June 2016

Moderator: Jens Bjornavold (Expert, Cedefop)

- 09:00-09:30 **Arrival and registration of participants**
- 9:30-09:35 **Welcome**  
Mirko van Muijen (*Head of Section Education, Culture & Audiovisual affairs, Dutch Perm Rep*)
- 09:35-09:45 **Opening**  
**Tackling skill mismatch: Cedefop's support to EU Member States**  
Mara Brugia (*Deputy-Director, Cedefop*)

## Skill mismatches in EU labour markets What are they and why should we care?

- 09:45-10:15 **The Cedefop European skills and jobs survey: key challenges for matching skills and jobs in Europe**  
Pascaline Descy (*HoD Skills and Labour Market, Cedefop*)
- 10:15-10:30 **Skill shortages in the EU: Turning bottleneck into opportunity**  
Konstantinos Pouliakas (*Expert, Cedefop*)
- 10:30-11:00 **Q&A session – Matching skills and jobs: are we on the right track?**  
Discussant: Ken Mayhew  
(*Professor, SKOPE, Oxford & Maastricht University*)  
Chair: Mara Brugia (*Deputy-Director, Cedefop*)



- 11:00-11:30 **Tea/coffee break**

## Overcoming skill mismatches Making policies work

- 11:30-11:45 **Skills matching policies in the EU: the need for synergy**  
Jasper van Loo (*Expert, Cedefop*)
- 11:45-12:00 **Using LMI for informed decisions: the EU Skills Panorama**  
Konstantinos Pouliakas (*Expert, Cedefop*)
- 12:00-12:30 **Public policies for skills matching: evidence from PIAAC**  
Dan Andrews (*Senior Economist, OECD*)
- 12:30-13:00 **Q&A session – The New Skills Agenda for Europe: will it work?**  
Detlef Eckert (*Director, DG EMPL*)  
Chair: Pascaline Descy (*HoD Skills and Labour Market, Cedefop*)  
Concluding remarks by Jens Bjornavold (Expert, Cedefop)