



# Strengthening foundations for a competitive Europe

## The skills nexus between productivity and job quality

29-30 June 2026

*“Competitiveness depends on people. It is the professional skills of people that are crucial for Europe to adapt to new transitions and to develop new innovations into globally competitive companies. In EU we have many strengths but it’s clear that we also have many challenges in this area. We need to close the skills gap, and we need to empower each and everyone to develop their skills for quality jobs.” (Ylva Johansson, chair of the European Skills High-Level Board)*

## Draft programme

**DAY 1 – 29 June 2026** (all times are EET)

<b>14.00 – 14.30</b>	<b>Participant arrival and registration</b>
<b>14:30 – 15.15</b> <i>Europa room</i>	<b>Welcome and opening</b> Chair: Antonio Ranieri, <i>Head of Department for VET and Skills, Cedefop</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Jürgen Siebel, <i>Executive Director, Cedefop</i></li><li>▪ <i>Representative of the European Skills High-Level Board, former Sweden’s Minister for Employment and Minister for Schools</i></li><li>▪ <i>Representative of Director-General of Directorate General “Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion” (EMPL), European Commission</i></li><li>▪ Stelios Himonas, <i>Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Cyprus, Presidency of the Council of the EU</i></li></ul>



<p><b>15.15 – 16.15</b> <i>Europa room</i></p>	<p>Session 1. <b>At the heart of the participation - skills development nexus in EU workplaces</b></p> <p>Chair: Giulia Santangelo, <i>Cedefop</i></p> <p><b>Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giovanni Russo, <i>Cedefop</i>, Motivating upskilling in EU workplaces: findings from the ETL Survey</li> <li>• Lidia Salvatore/Ramona David, <i>Cedefop</i>, CVET foresight scenarios: reframing skills and VET policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>16.15 – 16.45</b></p>	<p><b>Coffee break and group photo</b></p>
<p><b>16.45 – 18.00</b> <i>Europa room</i></p>	<p>Session 2. <b>Experts' panel discussion</b> <b>Navigating the future of VET and skills development systems</b></p> <p>Moderator: Lidia Salvatore/Ramona David, <i>Cedefop</i></p> <p><i>Cross-industry social partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Representative of ETUI</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Juan Jose Luis Delgado, IndustriAll</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Christos Ioannou, BusinessEurope and Hellenic Federation of Enterprises - SEV</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Representative of SMEunited</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Governments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Representative of the Cypriot Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Representative of the Irish Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science</i></li> </ul>



## DAY 2 – 30 June 2026 (all times are EET)

09.00 – 09.30	<b>Participant arrival and registration</b>
09.30 – 10.30 <i>Europa room</i>	Session 3. <b>Technology and productivity</b> Chair: Ralph Hippe, <i>Cedefop</i> <b>Presentations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Nathalie Greenan, <i>Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM) and Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi et du Travail (CEET)</i>, Technology and automation</li><li>Valeria Cirillo, <i>University of Bari</i>, Technological adoption and productivity</li></ul>
10.30 – 11.00 <i>Parallel sessions</i>	Session 4. <b>Skills development in EU workplaces</b>
<i>Breakout 1</i> <i>Europa room</i>	<b>Leadership shaping learning</b> Moderator: Giovanni Russo, <i>Cedefop</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Simon Beausaert, <i>Maastricht University</i>, Organisational support for learning in EU workplaces</li></ul>
<i>Breakout 2</i> <i>Montessori room</i>	<b>Competitiveness and future skills demand</b> Moderator: Giulia Santangelo, <i>Cedefop</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pier Paolo Angelini, <i>Cedefop</i>, Evidence from Skills forecast scenario</li></ul>
<i>Breakout 3</i> <i>Rousseau room</i>	<b>Technological change, job tasks and upskilling of European workers</b> Moderator: Ilias Livanos, <i>Cedefop</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Konstantinos Pouliakas, <i>Cedefop</i>, Evidence from European Skills and Jobs survey</li></ul>
11.00 – 11.15	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11.15 – 12.00 <i>Parallel sessions</i> <i>(various locations)</i>	Session 4. <b>Group Discussion</b>



<p><b>12.00 – 13.00</b> <i>Europa room</i></p>	<p>Session 5. <b>A new competitiveness paradigm</b> Chair: Giovanni Russo, <i>Cedefop</i> <b>Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative of <i>EC DG RTD Industry 5.0</i> (tbc), Human centrality</li> <li>• Steven Dhondt, <i>TNO</i>, Learning in Industry 5.0</li> </ul>
<p><b>13.00 – 14.15</b></p>	<p><b>Lunch Break</b></p>
<p><b>14.15 – 15.15</b> <i>Europa room</i></p>	<p>Session 6. <b>Skills development, skills utilisation</b> Chair: Ralph Hippe, <i>Cedefop</i> <b>Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evangelia Demerouti, <i>nTU/e Eindhoven University of Technology</i>, Motivating adult learning in workplaces</li> <li>• Marianne van Woerkom, <i>Tilburg University</i>, A strengths-based approach to workplace learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>15.15 – 15.45</b></p>	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
<p><b>15.45. – 16.45</b> <i>Europa room</i></p>	<p>Session 7. <b>Good jobs for a competitive Europe</b> Chair: Giulia Santangelo, <i>Cedefop</i> <b>Presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chris Warhurst, <i>University of Warwick</i>, Building a business case for good jobs</li> <li>• Sotiria Theodoropoulou, <i>ETUI</i>, Benchmarking working Europe 2025</li> </ul>
<p><b>16.45 –17.00</b> <i>Europa room</i></p>	<p>Session 8. <b>Taking stock of plenary and breakout discussions</b> Jasper van Loo, <i>Cedefop</i> <b>Closing remarks</b> Mara Brugia, <i>Deputy Director, Cedefop</i></p>

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