



## Commission presents European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience

Brussels, 1 July 2020

Today the Commission presents the European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience. It sets ambitious, quantitative objectives for upskilling (improving existing skills) and reskilling (training in new skills) to be achieved within the next 5 years. Its 12 actions focus on skills for jobs by partnering up with Member States, companies and social partners to work together for change, by empowering people to embark on lifelong learning, and by using the EU budget as a catalyst to unlock public and private investment in people's skills.

The aim is to ensure that the right to training and lifelong learning, enshrined in the European Pillar of Social rights, becomes a reality all across Europe, from cities to remote and rural areas, to the benefit of everyone. The Commission is placing skills at the heart of the EU policy agenda, steering investment in people and their skills for a sustainable recovery after the coronavirus pandemic. Businesses need workers with the skills required to master the green and digital transitions, and people need to be able to get the right education and training to thrive in life.

Margaritis **Schinus**, Vice-President for Promoting the European Way of Life, said: *"This unprecedented crisis needs an unprecedented answer. One that will serve us today and for many years to come. Today, the European Commission calls on EU Member States to invest in skills. The billions of EU funding put forward in the EU Recovery Plan and future long-term EU budget provide a unique opportunity to do so. We already know that skills are what allow people and our economies to thrive. Now, it is time to join hands and unlock a skills revolution, leaving nobody behind."*

Nicolas **Schmit**, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, said: *"The skilling of our workforces is one of our central responses to the recovery, and providing people the chance to build the skillsets they need is key to preparing for the green and digital transitions. It gives everyone the possibility to benefit from new opportunities in a fast-moving labour market."*

### Skills for jobs in a green and digital economy

The green and digital transitions as accompanied by demographic trends are transforming how we live, work and interact. We want to ensure people have the skills they need to thrive. The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated these transitions and brought new career challenges for many people in Europe. In the aftermath of the crisis, many Europeans will need to retrain in a new skill or improve their existing skills to adapt to the changed labour market. The Skills Agenda aims to improve the relevance of skills in the EU to strengthen sustainable competitiveness, ensure social fairness and build our resilience. It does this through 12 "actions" .

1. A Pact for Skills
2. Strengthening skills intelligence
3. EU support for strategic national upskilling action
4. Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience
5. Rolling out the European universities initiative and upskilling scientists
6. Skills to support the green and digital transitions
7. Increasing STEM graduates and fostering entrepreneurial and transversal skills
8. Skills for Life
9. Initiative on Individual Learning Accounts
10. A European approach to micro-credentials
11. New Europass Platform
12. Improving the enabling framework to unlock Member States' and private investments in skills

More details on each of the 12 flagship actions can be found in the [accompanying Q&A](#).

The [new Europass platform](#) is launched today as the first implemented action of the Skills Agenda. As of today, it offers guidance in CV-writing, suggests tailored jobs and learning opportunities, provides information on trends in skills, and is available in 29 languages.

Also today the Commission adopts its proposal for a Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training.

#### Ambitious objectives

As part of its bold new skills policy, the Commission has set ambitious objectives for the next 5 years. They are based on existing indicators, which will allow to monitor progress yearly through the European Semester. At this stage, no quantitative indicators on green skills exist, so the Commission will develop new ones.

| Indicators  | Objectives for 2025 | Current level (latest year available) | Increase (in %) |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Participation of adults aged 25-64 in learning over a period of 12 months               | 50%                 | 38% (2016)                            | <b>+ 32%</b>    |
| Participation of low-qualified adults aged 25-64 in learning over a period of 12 months | 30%                 | 18% (2016)                            | <b>+ 67%</b>    |
| Share of unemployed adults 25-64 with a recent learning experience                      | 20%                 | 11% (2019)                            | <b>+ 82%</b>    |
| Share of adults 16-74 having at least basic digital skills                              | 70%                 | 56% (2019)                            | <b>+ 25%</b>    |

This means we should see 540 million training activities for adults by 2025, including 60 million for low-qualified adults, and 40 million for unemployed people. The number of adults with basic digital skills should increase to 230 million.

#### Unlocking investment in people's skills

To implement the actions and meet the objectives of the Skills Agenda, the EU will need estimated additional public and private investments in skills of around €48 billion annually. The Commission's proposal for NextGenerationEU provides significant resources as part of a major budgetary initiative to tackle the economic and social consequences of the crisis.

EU funds can act as a catalyst for investing in people's skills. In the context of the EU Recovery Plan, unprecedented financial resources are proposed to support a sustainable recovery, and investment in skills should be at the heart of these efforts. Throughout the 2021-2027 period, EU instruments such as the European Social Fund Plus with a proposed budget of €86 billion, Erasmus with a proposed budget of €26 billion and InvestEU's Social Investment and Skills window with a proposed budget of €3.6 billion can all be mobilised to help people gain better or new skills. The new Digital Europe Programme with a proposed budget €9.2 billion will invest in advanced digital skills development to master technologies. Moreover, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, powered by €560 billion in grants and loans, provides Member States with ample opportunity to fund upskilling and reskilling initiatives, with the appropriate reforms in place.

#### Background

The move to a resource-efficient, circular, digitised and low-carbon economy could create more than 1 million jobs by 2030. Artificial intelligence and robotics alone will create almost 60 million new jobs worldwide in the next 5 years. Other jobs may change or even disappear. The coronavirus pandemic has amplified the skills trends in the labour market, accelerating both the need and opportunities for change. In a fast-moving labour market and society, lifelong learning must become a reality.

Today's initiatives build on the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#), proclaimed by EU institutions and leaders in November 2017 and the [Communication on a Strong Social Europe for Just Transitions](#) published in January 2020.

#### For More Information

[Questions and Answers on a European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience](#)

[Factsheet: European Skills Agenda](#)

[Communication: "European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience"](#)

[Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training](#)

[Factsheet on Vocational Education and Training](#)

[Visit the new Europass platform](#)

Have Your Say: [public consultation page for social Europe](#)

Follow [Margaritis Schinas](#) and [Nicolas Schmit](#) on Twitter

Subscribe to the European Commission's free e-mail [newsletter](#) on employment, social affairs and inclusion

IP/20/1196

Press contacts:

[Marta WIECZOREK](#) (+32 2 295 81 97)

[Siobhán MILLBRIGHT](#) (+32 2 295 73 61)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

Related media

 [Illustration 2020](#)