



European Commission

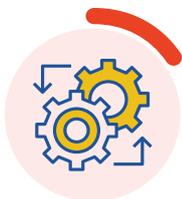
# TRANSVERSAL SKILLS

January 2024  
#EuropeanYearOfSkills

Transversal skills like **critical thinking, teamwork, and learning skills** are essential for work, education and daily life. Developing and recognising these skills play an important role in promoting sustainable economic growth, social inclusion, and competitiveness. The EU supports employers, workers and training institutions in advancing these skills.

## THE SITUATION

Human creativity, emotional intelligence and innovation remain irreplaceable, even if:



**14%** of jobs are highly automatable



**32%** of jobs might change substantially due to AI within this decade

Both workers and employers value transversal skills that help to adapt the changing work landscape, particularly in the green and digital transitions.



**24.5%** of candidates lack transversal skills.

SMEs in the EU see a growing importance of these transversal skills:



**68%**  
for soft skills



**62%**  
for digital skills



**42%**  
for green skills

## EU INITIATIVES FOR TRANSVERSAL SKILLS

- ✓ The **Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning** focuses on the development of key competences and transversal skills such as learning to learn, problem solving, team work, communication and negotiation skills.
- ✓ The **European Skills Agenda** sets out a five-year plan to ensure that people in Europe develop the skills they need for the jobs of today and tomorrow. One of the key priorities is to foster transversal skills, such as entrepreneurial and creative problem-solving competences, which are increasingly in demand across all sectors in the labour market.
- ✓ The **Pact for Skills** brings together public and private actors to commit to developing and investing in reskilling workers. Since its launch, 20 large-scale partnerships have been set up with pledges to help develop the skills of at least 10 million workers. The Pact has so far provided training to more than 2 million workers, with 15,500 training programmes either updated or developed, and €160 million invested into training programmes.
- ✓ The **Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning** encourages Member States to develop validation arrangements for skills acquired outside formal education and training, as is often the case for transversal skills such as communication, critical thinking, and teamwork.
- ✓ **ESCO** (the European classification of Skills, Competences and Occupations) provides a standardised terminology to classify and describe transversal skills in 28 languages. **Europass** is a set of online tools to help individuals showcase their skills and experiences in a clear and standardised way to potential employers, including a dedicated section for transversal skills, based on ESCO.
- ✓ The **European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning** (EQF) envisages that all qualifications should be described in terms of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and autonomy and responsibility). This contributes to giving better visibility to transversal skills.
- ✓ The **European validation guidelines** provide a consistent and transparent framework for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning, including transversal skills.

## EU FUNDING AVAILABLE

Several EU funds with significant budgets support transversal skills:

