



European
Commission



BLUEPRINT FOR SECTORAL COOPERATION ON SKILLS

Responding to skills
mismatches at
sectoral level

A key action of the New
Skills Agenda for Europe

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Introduction

Technological progress and globalisation are revolutionising the way we live, learn, work and do business. Digital and other key technologies are reshaping the foundations of industry and the wider global economy.

This offers tremendous opportunities for innovation, growth and jobs, but it also requires skilled and adaptable people who are able to drive and support change.

In order to deliver **sector-specific skills solutions**, the New Skills Agenda for Europe has launched **the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation** on Skills. The Blueprint is a new framework for strategic cooperation between key stakeholders (e.g. businesses, trade unions, research, education and training institutions, public authorities) in a given economic sector. It will stimulate investment and encourage the strategic use of EU and national funding opportunities. The aim is to develop concrete actions to satisfy short and medium term skills needs to support the overall sectoral strategy.

The Blueprint can only bring results if it is driven and owned by sector stakeholders. In this respect, the full involvement of social partners is very important. The Blueprint has been and will continue to be discussed in an open exchange with interested parties, including in the context of sectoral social dialogue committees.

The Blueprint builds on previous work by the European Commission and sectoral partners (in particular the Sector Skills Councils¹ and the European Sector Skills Alliances²) to fight sector skills mismatches. Going forward, it could also support smart specialisation strategies, which help regions choose to specialise in sectors where they can be most competitive.³

All relevant EU and national qualitative evidence and quantitative data produced under the Blueprint will contribute to the Skills Panorama and the new Europass Framework.⁴

For the latest news and updates please visit <http://europa.eu!/gc96YU>

Three steps to match skills to sectors' needs

The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills fosters sustainable partnerships among stakeholders to translate a sector's growth agenda into a comprehensive skills strategy and to take action to address sectoral skills needs.

Six Pilot Sectors



AUTOMOTIVE



DEFENCE



MARITIME
TECHNOLOGY



SPACE
(GEO INFORMATION)



TEXTILE,
CLOTHING,
LEATHER AND
FOOTWEAR



TOURISM

The Blueprint will be extended to additional sectors in the future.

1. Is the sector ready for an EU-wide partnership on skills?

In this preliminary phase, skills gaps in the sector and their potential impact on growth, innovation and competitiveness are assessed.

The presence and maturity of the overall growth strategy for the sector is verified, as well as the link to EU policy priorities. On this basis, the decision is taken on whether to move to the next phases or not. This groundwork is carried out by the Commission in cooperation with social partners and stakeholders. It can take place in more or less structured ways, depending on the way the sector is organised.

2. Launching sustainable sectoral partnerships

Once the sectors have been chosen, the Commission supports the set-up and the work of sectoral partnerships at EU-level. Each partnership will develop a sectoral skills strategy to support the objectives of the overall growth strategy for the sector and match the demand and supply of skills.

Partners will look into how major trends, such as global, societal, and technological developments, are likely to affect jobs and skills needs, as well as their potential impact on growth, competitiveness and employment in the sector (e.g. restructuring, hard-to-fill vacancies). It will then identify priorities and milestones for action and develop concrete solutions. The partnership will:

- Revise or create occupational profiles and the corresponding skills needs, drawing on the classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)⁵ and existing competence frameworks⁶;
- Update or create curricula while promoting sectoral qualifications and certifications;
- Promote benefits of choosing a career in the sector and foster gender balance;
- Promote job-seeker and student mobility across Europe in the sector, capitalising on the use of existing EU tools⁷;
- Identify successful projects and best practices, including effective use of EU funding;
- Design an industry-led action plan for the long-term roll-out of the strategy and its results and ensure sustained cooperation among stakeholders at European, national and regional levels.

The platforms will build on European tools relating to skills and qualifications.⁸

3. Roll-out at national and regional level

Building on the results achieved at EU level, the Blueprint will be **rolled out at national and regional level**, in cooperation with national and regional authorities, and stakeholders. The members of the EU partnerships and the Commission will actively engage in dissemination and awareness raising activities to rally all interested national and regional stakeholders and ensure broad involvement and take up. The main tasks of national/regional partnerships will be to:

- Implement the EU-level sectoral skills strategy and action plan recommendations, while adapting them to national contexts and priorities;
- Implement business-education-research partnerships on the ground, including in the context of smart specialisation⁹;
- Raise visibility and share results widely to influence EU, national and regional policies, initiatives and intelligence tools.

Funding the Blueprint

The Blueprint is a new framework for strategic cooperation between stakeholders and is independent from individual funding instruments. However, a number of funding opportunities are available to support the different steps.

Lessons learned during the pilot phase will help in refining the Blueprint, including funding arrangements.

Step 1

This is a preliminary phase of the Blueprint. It is only at the end of the step that the decision on going ahead with the Blueprint is taken, therefore there is no dedicated funding. However, relevant activities can be funded by existing instruments. Work on step 1 should start with the sector's interest. It should reflect how the sector is organised and take previous work into account. For example, calls for tender on sectoral studies could be launched by the Commission. Or, sectoral stakeholders could apply for projects under Erasmus+ Sector Skills Alliances (E+ SSA) Lot 1. Alternatively, work could be taken forward within existing structures at EU level, such as high level groups or sectoral dialogue committees.

Step 2

For the pilot phase, a specific call, open only to **the six pilot sectors**, will be published in early 2017, under the new **Lot 3 of the Erasmus+ Sector Skills Alliances**¹⁰. The call will make available € 4 million per sector to cover up to 80 % of eligible costs over a 4-year period. Only one European Alliance per sector will be supported. It must ensure good coverage of EU Member States and be representative of the sector. It must be led by representatives of the industry (e.g. companies, chambers or trade associations) and include education and training providers. The presence of social partners and public authorities is highly encouraged.

In 2017, calls for tenders will also be published under the COSME programme¹¹. Other funding opportunities and arrangements could be considered in the future, also taking into account the results of the pilot phase.

Step 3

This step needs to be financed at national and regional level. EU Structural and Investment Funds¹² (ESIF) could support Step 3 of the Blueprint, but this would require a decision by the relevant managing authorities. The EU partnerships will look into replicable models to facilitate the use of EU funding to support this step. Other public and private funding should also be used.

AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the **automotive sector**?



The automotive industry is one of the main driving forces in the European economy; it accounts for almost 7 % of the EU's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provides employment to 12.2 million workers (5.6 % of total EU employment). Direct jobs in automotive manufacturing amount to 2.3 million people. It is world leader in terms of product innovation; accounting for 20 % of Europe's industrial research funding. It constantly develops and furthers flexible and modular production systems, high-end design, alternative powertrain technologies and complex value chain management systems.

The automotive industry faces increased shortages of suitable workers (qualitative and quantitative). This is due mainly to the ageing workforce (23 % are approaching or starting to approach retirement age); the poor image of the manufacturing sector among young people (particularly women); the wide diversity of national education systems and cultures; and the accelerating pace of technological change.

Taking account of a pressing need to replace employees leaving the sector due to retirement or for other reasons, an estimated 900 000 automotive jobs will need to be filled between 2016 and 2025.

The automotive industry lacks STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) profiles and engineering jobs and is facing stiff competition from other sectors in the search for those highly skilled employees.

The sector is facing many structural changes, including stricter emission standards and decarbonisation, new mobility concepts; growing use of connectivity and digital technologies in vehicles; changes in consumer preferences; relocation to low-cost countries and the development of global manufacturing systems.

Such change and the growing automation of manufacturing processes requires automotive

industry workers to acquire more advanced technical skills. Employers therefore depend not only on a steady supply of STEM graduates. They need to build workforces that are not only technically skilled, but which also have the ability to solve problems, to work in teams and adapt fast.

For instance, the continued development of cleaner vehicles is projected to impact considerably on the occupational and skills profile of the sector. Over half of the total job openings to 2025 are forecast to require high-level qualifications. The number of jobs requiring low- and medium-level qualifications will decline. The push for clean vehicles will lead to new jobs in research & development (R&D), design and will require an increase in senior positions in the manufacturing process.

Similarly, the need to have connected vehicles with advanced electronic information and entertainment features will require new skills and novel technologies in the near future. New areas of expertise, including those which result from the ongoing shift to highly sophisticated, digital manufacturing (Industry 4.0), will therefore need to be added in order to bridge the existing knowledge gap between the automotive and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector.

These changes involve the whole automotive value chain, including the replacement market, whose products are becoming increasingly technology-intensive, requiring new and more complex expertise, combining several competences.

Furthermore, many Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the value chain lack the capacity to develop specific education programmes on their own.

The workforce must adapt to new technologies and changes in customer expectations and acquire the new skills to prevent further relocation of business processes outside Europe. The mobility of graduates and skilled workers will also be vital in tackling regional skills mismatches in the EU.

Find out more**Automotive Skills Council:**<http://www.euautomotiveskillscouncil.eu/>**GEAR 2030 initiative:**<http://ec.europa.eu/gear2030>

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will gather stakeholders from across Europe and throughout the automotive value chain to:

- 1 Address the mismatches between the industry's needs and education supply by:**
 - Promoting upskilling and the acquisition of digital, mechatronic, mechemtronic and transversal skills (including by identifying relevant teacher training/industry exchange and equipment for education and training providers) enabling the sector to keep up with the challenges stemming from new technologies;
 - Developing programmes for **inter-generational learning**;
 - Developing **innovative educational tools, vocational training and apprenticeship programmes**.
- 2 Improve the image of the automotive sector by:**
 - Developing and implementing programmes/schemes (recruitment initiatives, first-hand experience of the industry in action, support material, presentations and webinars promoting the new profiles in the automotive sector) **to attract and retain young graduates and women**;
 - Developing hybrid programmes in vocational education and training and universities, including seminars on industry subjects and apprenticeships to put skills into practice;
 - Developing **awareness raising activities** and social media campaigns to promote the industry to students.
- 3 Establishing long-term cooperation and exchange of good practice among:**
 - Industry stakeholders and research institutes;
 - Education and training providers involved in skills development within the sector at EU, national and regional levels.

Links to other related projects and initiatives

In 2014 the Commission launched, together with the industry, the European Automotive Skills Council (EASC) as part of the actions in the CARS 2020 Action Plan. EASC conducted a survey to map the skills mismatch and identify the future training needs for the automotive industry. The final report was published in February 2016.

Moreover, ESCO classification (European Skills/Competences, Occupations and Qualifications) was developed for the Manufacturing of Transport Equipment skills.

DEFENCE SECTOR

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the defence sector?



With a turnover of nearly € 100 billion the European defence industry represents a major contribution to the wider economy. It directly employs more than 500 000 people of which more than 50 % are **highly skilled and specialised employees**¹³. According to estimates it generates up to another 1 200 000 indirect jobs¹⁴.

Moreover, most companies with a defence profile also supply products for dual or even purely civilian use, and this is expected to increase in the future. The economic impact of the sector will therefore increase further.

The defence industry is an important generator of **technology innovation** and is centred on high-end engineering. Its cutting-edge research has created important knock-on effects in other sectors, such as electronics, space and civil aviation. Innovation, nevertheless, is increasingly coming from the civil sector. Defence will very likely also be affected by the new industrial revolution (Industry 4.0). Although it is not clear what the defence industry of the future will look like, it is likely to be different from today and it **needs to start preparing for this now**.

As the majority of employees will work on civil and defence technologies and products during their career, this means that many of the skills required in the defence sector should be transferable to and from other industrial sectors. However, companies are experiencing skill shortages. This trend is expected to increase due to an ageing workforce and difficulties in attracting and keeping young professionals¹⁵.

The European defence sector consists of a few large companies and a large number of SMEs operating throughout the EU. Whereas large companies tend to have their own skills strategies, it is mostly the SMEs (often **specialised in cutting-edge technologies**) that are struggling to attract, create and maintain

high-end skills and preserve their comparative advantage. Often SMEs lose employees that have acquired specific skills to large companies that can offer them greater career opportunities.

The European defence industry **has to retain key skills and acquire new ones to remain in a position to deliver high-tech military products to meet security needs and compete in the global market**. Due to the high-tech level of defence products, it may take a generation to recover lost skills, with profound implications for **Europe's strategic autonomy**.

The European Commission is committed to providing concrete support in ensuring Europe has an industrial base able to meet its strategic defence needs. The European Defence Action Plan, announced by President Juncker, is identifying ways EU programmes and funds can be used to support the sector, in line with the objectives of the European Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy, adopted in June 2016.

To address the skills challenges, and make defence an attractive prospect for young Europeans, the Commission recognises the importance of bringing together defence stakeholders to join forces in identifying and tackling skills gaps at European level. In view of the importance of the issue for a strategic sector of Europe's economy, defence became one of the pilot sectors announced in the New Skills Agenda for Europe under the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills initiative.

Find out more

Details about European Commission initiatives to develop skills in the defence sector, including a 2015 EU study on skills and competences in defence:

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/defence/industrial-policy/skills_en

The website of the European Network in Defence-related Regions:

www.endr.eu

A guide to EU funding for dual use for regions and SMEs, 2014:

<http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/12601/attachments/1/translations/>

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will enable key stakeholders in the defence sector to develop solutions in order to:

- Complement the existing evidence and deliver all data necessary to present a complete picture of where the sector stands regarding skills that will facilitate decision-making;
- Bring stakeholders around the table to define and agree a strategy to address skills gaps;
- Establish a European Defence Skills Partnership to oversee the implementation of the strategy;
- Put in place sustainable solutions, starting with the most imminent defence skills needs;
- Follow up, roll out and update the skills strategy long-term as necessary, ensuring all actions are in line with it and sustainable.

Stakeholder ownership of this process is essential if the results are to benefit the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base. Cooperation between industry, academia, research and authorities is also key, as are synergies with other initiatives (COSME tools, the Digital Skills & Jobs Coalition, Member States initiatives etc.).

As a basis for further work, the first defence skills taxonomy, including a ranking of defence-specific skills, was produced in 2015, accompanied by a mapping of education and training supply, a first set of best practices and identified challenges.¹⁶

Links to other related projects and initiatives

To remain strong, the European defence industry needs to innovate. The Commission is proposing to open up its budget for defence. A Preparatory Action on Defence Research will pave the way for the financing of defence research under the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF).

To support innovation to find its way to market and to be backed with the necessary skills, the Commission is considering initiatives to improve the knowledge and innovation base on dual use. Such initiatives could build on the actions of the Blueprint and create additional incentives to capitalise on the results of the research budget. This would reinforce the sector's innovation capacity, cooperation between industry, academia and research, strengthen business at European level and support new businesses.

Other initiatives and tools that indirectly contribute to addressing skills in the sector are the European Network of Defence-related Regions, the 2014 Guide on EU Funding for Dual Use for Regions and SMEs, and both the ESCO database and the EU Skills Panorama that are feeding into the taxonomy of defence related skills to improve matching between demand, supply and mobility of workers.

MARITIME TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the maritime technology sector?



Seas and oceans are drivers for the European economy and have great potential for innovation and growth. The European maritime technology industry is a forerunner and world leader in terms of innovation. It is a key enabler, providing the more advanced technologies and structures needed to ensure the development of all other maritime activities, such as offshore renewable energies or aquaculture. This is vital to secure Europe's needs in terms of transport, defence, energy and food supply.

The maritime technology sector has a turnover of € 91 billion and directly employs more than 500 000 people of which a high percentage are high skilled. It generates at least as many additional jobs and contributes significantly to regional development (200 regions in 18 countries).¹⁷

The economic and financial crisis that started in 2008 dramatically hit the maritime technology sector. The industry went through painful restructuring and widespread job losses. In order to maintain its leading position, European companies abandoned mass markets in favour of complex, high-tech products and services based on knowledge, innovation and technology. It became an innovation-driven, technologically advanced industry requiring more and more highly skilled technical people. The sector is among the most research intensive in Europe, with 9 % of its GDP invested in Research, Development and Innovation (RDI). It is continuously innovating and diversifying into new activities. The industry is providing the technologies to enable the sustainable and safe development of Blue Economy activities: offshore wind, marine energies, marine biotechnology, aquaculture, deep sea exploration and surveillance etc. In addition, recent years have seen the development of multipurpose offshore platforms, serving for different activities such as aquaculture and offshore wind.

Skills gaps in the marine and maritime industry have been identified in several policy documents in recent years, such as LeaderSHIP 2020¹⁸. The 2014 Communication "Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth"¹⁹ highlighted that the scarcity of a skilled workforce, able to apply the latest technologies, represents one of the main obstacles to the further development of the Blue Economy. In fact, the demand for skills is changing. This is partly due to highly specific niches (in which lies the sector's future competitiveness) and also because growing markets mean more and more competing actors and technologies. A number of changes are already anticipated in the sector, linked to technological, infrastructural and business-related advancements. In this context, the most important areas of skills for the maritime technology relate to engineering and IT processes.

Closely linked to the availability of new skills is the need for dedicated research & development programmes, able to deliver innovative technologies. For example, in recent years, the maritime transport sector has been working on designing and producing environmentally friendly and energy efficient ships, with the overarching objective of supporting a stable perspective for continuous investment in "greening" the sector.

Only by anticipating employment and skills needs can the sector address emerging and future skills gaps and shortages. Close cooperation between stakeholders from both the industry and the education and training world is therefore key to ensuring sustainable growth.

Find out more

Details about European Commission initiatives to develop skills in the maritime technology sector:
https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/maritime_en

Blue Careers in Europe: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/call-proposals-blue-careers-europe>

Expert group on “Skills and Career Development in the Blue Economy”:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/contracts_and_funding/calls-for-applications/index_en.htm

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will gather key stakeholders from different maritime technology segments and diverse geographical areas, enabling them to:

- **Identify skills needs** (both sector specific and soft skills) **and related profiles** in the areas of i) traditional maritime technology products, such as shipbuilding and offshore oil & gas, etc. ii) renewable energy including offshore wind, ocean energy, etc. iii) other Blue Economy relevant sectors, for example aquaculture, marine biotechnology, monitoring & observation;
- Develop and implement a programme or scheme to **improve the image** of the maritime technology sector at EU level and to **raise awareness** of career opportunities;
- Develop a programme to boost **ocean literacy** across Europe, through innovative activities;
- Create schemes to develop **internship and mobility programmes** for students across Europe to test their acquired skills in relevant companies or public bodies;
- Develop a **maritime entrepreneurship** scheme to support students with innovative ideas in the maritime technology sector.

Links to other related projects and initiatives

A European Skills Council for the Maritime Technology Sector was established in 2014 to identify skills gaps and create regional and inter-sectoral synergies through social dialogue. It carried out a survey that demonstrated a lack of qualified and available people in the job market and forecasted an increase in employment over 2-5 years. It delivered a list of the most demanded skills and occupations and showcased best practices. The work needs to continue now to facilitate planning and coordination of activities at national and regional level and ensure that the educational providers give students the necessary skills and training to meet evolving industry needs. This will be vital to helping the maritime technology sector stay competitive worldwide.

- The Blue Careers in Europe call for proposals was launched in February 2016 under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and managed by the European Commission and EASME. The call brings industry and education/training providers together at local and regional level to design and implement actions replying to the skills needs of the maritime labour market of an identified sector. In addition, projects will implement awareness raising and dissemination activities on ocean-related issues with a view to increase the visibility and attractiveness of blue careers’ opportunities, for example among secondary school and higher education students. The projects will start in January 2017.
- An expert group on “Skills and Career Development in the Blue Economy” has been set-up by the Commission to develop the skills policy within the Blue Economy. Given the complexity and variety of the issue, the group representatives cover different sectors of the Blue Economy (shipping, shipbuilding, tourism, ocean energy, aquaculture, fisheries, marine biotechnology, etc.) and also represent the different sea basins.

SPACE DATA (GEO INFORMATION) SECTOR

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the **space data (geo information) sector**?



The space sector is strategically important in supporting a number of economic activities and policy areas. Therefore it provides an important contribution to several European Commission priorities including: a deeper and fairer internal market with a strengthened industrial base; jobs, growth and investment (space and all industries building on satellite services); Energy Union (climate, transport, energy); the Digital Single Market (telecommunication, data economy); migration, border control, global disaster and crisis management; and the EU as a Stronger Global Actor.

The EU, through the Commission, is one of the biggest contributors to space programmes in Europe (1/4 of the ESA budget) and the biggest institutional user of the European launcher industry. In the years 2014-2020, the EU will invest over € 12 billion in the space flagship programmes (Galileo and Copernicus) and Horizon 2020 space research. These investments are expected to create substantial European market opportunities, in particular for European industry and SMEs, through the development of value-added downstream services and applications, which require continuous and sustained access to spaceborne data.

At the same time, the global space industry is experiencing profound changes due to new technological breakthroughs and innovations, which attract new companies/players and foster new business models. It is fundamental for Europe to stay at the forefront of these changes.

Recent EU projects have also identified, in the area of geospatial applications, a clear teaching gap with regard to “mobile” competences and a possible teaching gap with regard to “programming” competences and also in the knowledge areas of organisational & institutional aspects, design aspects, analysis methods and data manipulation²⁰.

When examining human capital, it is important to consider the next generation of employees who may get involved in space programmes. The majority of jobs available in the space sector can be found in the scientific and engineering fields. The recent study “Space market uptake in Europe”, highlighted that a lack of specialised technical and scientific skills could also prevent private enterprises from exploiting opportunities in space data. This is a barrier for the space data market’s development.

The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills is a result of collaboration across Commission services to boost skills in the space data sector. The purpose is to help stakeholders work together to scale up, develop, test and disseminate innovative best practices, tools and initiatives. This will serve to educate young people and professional workers alike to use space data for societal good.

Find out more**The website of the Copernicus programme:**<http://copernicus.eu/>**Public documentation:**<http://copernicus.eu/library/detail/248>**Videos:**<http://copernicus.eu/videos>

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will enable stakeholders in the space data (geo information) sector to:

- Test strategic and innovative tools and methodologies to develop new, accessible educational approaches and “easy to use” applications of space data;
- Create a sustainable and replicable concept for implementing strategic cooperation to boost skills and increase space data adoption, with a focus on developing geo information services for selected business value chains;
- Identify best practices to exploit EU funding to support different career paths, based on the use of space data, for researchers, entrepreneurs and professionals (by value chains);
- Test, develop and implement a reference guide on the technical competences for geomatics curricula and professions to support intermediate and final users;
- Improve the relevance of curricula, certifications and qualifications for the different career paths and the industry’s professional needs by means of cooperation between education and training institutions and private/public sector actors;
- Enhance SMEs’ role and translate the benefit of EU space programmes and interdependent policies to boost interest in geospatial skills;
- Reinforce educational, outreach and training tools and the link with digital skills for big data;
- Reinforce entrepreneurial skills and support for spin-offs.

Links to other related projects and initiatives

The already operational Copernicus Earth Observation programme aims to find solutions to the skills gap and related issues. “**Interdisciplinary skills and cross-sectorial focus**” are key drivers of the overall measures identified within the Copernicus user uptake strategy.

The creation of a **Copernicus Academy Network** will contribute to the guided development of training and networking initiatives. This will increase the relevance of education and training, support research and facilitate knowledge transfer into professional profiles and industry needs.

The **Copernicus Relays** and a **Copernicus start-up programme** will promote the use of data and support businesses and start-ups.

Furthermore, the Commission will foster cooperation with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and its knowledge and innovation communities. It will strengthen activities and projects to promote the space data sector within education and the sciences.

TEXTILE/CLOTHING/LEATHER/FOOTWEAR (TCLF) SECTOR

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the **TCLF** sector?



The TCLF sector, comprising textiles, clothing, leather and footwear, is part of complex and interlinked value chains of fashion, high-end industries and relevant innovative technologies. These sectors are among the most promising and most creative in Europe. They provide an important contribution to the EU economy with 5 million people employed in the fashion value chain and over 1 million in high-end industries. Despite the economic crisis many European companies have expanded in global markets, thanks to knowledge within the sector and Europe's worldwide reputation for craftsmanship and quality.

However, in spite of innovation and creativity, the TCLF industry faces increasing skill gaps and shortages, mostly due to its ageing workforce, a mismatch between education and industry's needs, technological change and low levels of worker mobility.

The sector suffers from an image problem which causes difficulties in attracting new recruits, especially younger workers, creating significant skills gaps along the sector's entire supply value chain. Nonetheless, the sector has evolved, leading to many new opportunities that require a wide spectrum of skilled and qualified professionals from engineering technologists and digital experts to people with craftsmanship skills and more traditional knowledge.

Find out more

Details about European Commission initiatives to develop skills in the TCLF sector:

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/fashion/skills_en

TCLF Skills Council:

<http://europeanskillscouncil.t-c-l.eu>

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will enable key stakeholders in the TCLF sector to develop solutions to:

- **Overcome mismatches between industry demand for skills and education supply**, through specific strategy, action plan and learning programmes addressing skills gaps, particularly by promoting both existing skills (e.g. traditional craftsmanship and artisanal skills) and emerging skills (e.g. digital skills, environmental skills, skills in technical textiles innovation);
- **Upgrade the image of careers in the TCLF sector**, by showing why the sector is such an attractive employer and how it can support desirable transversal career opportunities (e.g. starting a business in the TCLF sector);
- **Provide well-designed methods of training, educating and mentoring** using innovative educational and vocational training tools (online games, webinars, social media, etc.), taking into **consideration the specific needs of the sector**;
- **Upgrade transnational mobility in training and employment through** specific actions enabling and encouraging jobseekers and businesses to use existing EU tools and instruments (like Drop'Pin, Alliances for Traineeships, Erasmus+) in order to find and offer apprenticeships, traineeships and jobs in other EU countries;
- **Establishing long-term cooperation and good practice exchanges** among industry stakeholders, research institutes, education centres and VET providers involved in skills development in the sector at EU /national and regional levels.

The **focus** should be on concrete actions and measures. The development of sector-specific skills should be, where needed, complemented with transversal skills, notably entrepreneurial and business skills. Only close cooperation between key industry stakeholders, public authorities, research and education centres (including VET) will guarantee adequate implementation of these actions.

Links to other related projects and initiatives

The European Textile, Clothing, Leather and Footwear Skills Council (TCLF Skills Council) was the first established European Sector Skills Council (2011). It accomplished many results in the area of sector-based skills development (e.g. database²¹ of best practices of existing national and regional textile and clothing observatories dealing with skills in EU and candidate countries and the publication of four reports on skills needs). Stakeholders were involved in the ESCO sectoral reference group (TEXAN) developing a common language to compare skills, competences, occupations and qualifications. TCLF was one of the six sectors eligible for the Sector Skills Alliance call for proposals within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme for 2014, aiming to ensure that vocational education and training (VET) better responds to labour market needs.

The “**Knowledge Platform for Transferring Research and Innovation in Footwear**”²², has been designed to create a curriculum and platform for project-based learning to allow interns to transfer research and development skills and knowledge to the manufacturing field.

The “**Leather is my job!**”²³ project aimed to raise the interest of people - in particular young people - for this traditional, yet innovative industry.

SMEs, universities and non-governmental organisations cooperate in **TECLO** project, “**Textile and Clothing Knowledge Alliance**”²⁴, which promotes professional and transversal skills, with a special focus on entrepreneurship and innovation.

Why a blueprint for cooperation on skills in the **tourism sector**?



Tourism has huge potential to generate economic growth and create jobs. It is an important sector and makes a substantial contribution to the EU economy. In 2014, it directly and indirectly supported over 12 million jobs and contributed to 9.7 % of the total EU GDP.

13 % of tourism employees are aged under 25. Tourism is, in this sense, one of the main entry points to the labour market, providing a concrete answer to youth unemployment.

Tourism is also the largest employer of migrant workers, part-time workers, as well as female workers (58 % of people employed in core tourism activities are women) and it provides large job opportunities to workers re-entering the job market.

International tourism is expected to grow very fast. It will double by 2030, with 500 million potential new tourists from Asia alone. But, at the same time, increasingly fierce competition is expected from new emerging destinations outside of Europe.

The competitiveness of the tourism sector very much relies on the competences and skills of its workforce.

Yet, businesses in the industry, in particular SMEs, struggle to find and retain skilled employees and several challenges have been identified. In particular:

- The sector does not appear high on the list of the most popular graduate jobs, in particular due to a negative perception of job quality, seasonality and limited career prospects;
- Key skill gaps have been identified for the traditional core skills (foreign languages, interpersonal skills, communication, multicultural knowledge);
- New skills are needed for newly developed occupations (e.g. destination management, sustainable tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, accessible tourism, green tourism) and tourism professionals are expected to deliver innovative and customised services for a wider range of target groups, including seniors, or travellers with special needs;
- The explosion and rapid evolution of digitalisation in the tourism sector requires new, specific knowledge not only from employees, but also from tourism entrepreneurs. SMEs often lack the necessary e-management skills to keep up with the developments of online market places and distribution channels, as well as new forms of marketing and communication with customers;
- Education providers have a limited understanding of employers' requirements and travellers' expectations.

The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills will bring together businesses, education and training providers, professional associations, chambers of commerce, social partners and other relevant stakeholders to develop a targeted strategy and concrete action plan to close the skills gap in the tourism sector.

Find out more

Details about European Commission initiatives to develop skills in the tourism sector:

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/support-business_en

What can the blueprint achieve?

The Blueprint will enable stakeholders in the tourism sector to:

- **Facilitate cooperation and exchange of good practice.** Tourism is a fragmented sector, made up primarily of SMEs (90 %). Through enhanced cooperation between industry, public authorities and education providers, the partnership will identify common skills needs and define skills development strategies;
- **Overcome mismatch between offer and supply.** Specific actions will address skills gaps, particularly arising from digitalisation, new trends in tourism and challenges linked to an ageing and increasingly multicultural/international population. Impetus will also be given to entrepreneurial skills;
- **Support transnational mobility.** Specific actions will enable and encourage jobseekers and tourism businesses to use existing EU tools and instruments (like Drop'Pin, European Alliances for Apprenticeships and Erasmus+) in order to find and offer apprenticeships, traineeships and jobs in other EU countries;
- **Raise awareness about EU programmes and tools.** Specific actions will provide a tourism angle to existing tools for youth mobility and skills. They will also increase awareness of EU funding opportunities and programmes for investing in people in the tourism sector and provide guidance on how to make better use of such funds;
- **Enhance the image of tourism careers.** Actions will stimulate businesses in pursuing innovative ways to provide more focused training before and after recruitment, including new forms of apprenticeships or business preparation. Actions will showcase interesting aspects of tourism careers (like new exciting occupations and transnational opportunities).

Links to other related projects and initiatives

The Commission has developed a series of dedicated initiatives and tools available to industry, jobseekers and education providers. These include:

- The section dedicated to the hospitality sector in EURES²⁵, the European jobseeker mobility network. It provides information, guidance and support to jobseekers wishing to work in other Member States and to employers looking to recruit suitable candidates from other Member States;
- The “Skills Passport in Hospitality and Tourism” within EURES. Specific skills lists for three tourism subsectors (adventure, cultural and blue tourism) were integrated into this passport;
- The Tourism Business Portal²⁶. It provides information and tools to improve the management of companies in the tourism sector;
- The study “Mapping and Performance check of the supply side of tourism education and training”. It identifies major skills gaps in tourism education and training and the need for specific skills to adapt to new technological developments, customers’ expectations and new occupations;
- The study to map the skills needs to improve the accessibility and safety of tourism services for disabled people and people with special needs²⁷;
- In the context of the European Skills/Competences, Occupations, and Qualifications (ESCO)²⁸ the Commission in cooperation with industry and academia, is also developing skills profiles needed in the tourism sector;
- The section dedicated to Tourism in Drop'pin²⁹, a platform that aims to help young people boost their employability and skills by connecting them to traineeships and apprenticeships across Europe;
- The call for proposals published in April 2016 to facilitate the uptake of high quality jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships in the tourism sector across the EU³⁰. The call will co-finance one project for a budget of € 500 000.

Endnotes

1. **European Sector Skills Councils:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=784>
2. **Projects financed by Erasmus+:** https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/sector-skills-alliances_en
3. **Smart Specialisation Platform:** <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/home>
4. **Skills Panorama:** <http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en>; Europass: COM(2016) 625
5. **European Skills, Competences, Occupations, and Qualifications(ESCO):** <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>
6. **Examples of competence frameworks:** Digital Competence Framework for Citizens, the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework and the European e-Competence Framework
7. **Examples of EU employability and mobility tools:** Erasmus+, EURES, Drop'Pin, European Alliance for Apprenticeships
8. **Examples of EU skills & qualifications tools:** European Qualifications Framework, ESCO, Europass, ECVET and EQAVET
9. **Smart Specialisation Map:** <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/map>
10. **Erasmus+ Sector Skills Alliances:** http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/home/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-2-cooperation-for-innovation-and-exchange-good-practices/sector-skills_en
11. **COSME Programme:** https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme_en
12. **EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF):** http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/funds_en.htm
13. **Calculations based on ASD Facts & Figures, 2014**
14. **“Employment multiplier effect of between 2.2 to 2.4”** in Duran J., Isusi I., Corral A., **Study on the Perspectives of the European Land Armament Sector, IndustriAll, 2012, p. 38**
15. **Bergstrom et al., Anticipating Restructuring in the European Defence Industry, BIPE, 2008**
16. **Retter L., Taggart L., Freeman J., Study on Key Skills and Competences for Defence, RAND Europe, 2015, commissioned by EDA**
17. **Joint SEAEurope and IndustriALL Europe Position, February 2016**
18. **LeaderSHIP 2020, The sea, new opportunities for the future, 20 February 2013**
19. **Communication from the Commission: “Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth” - COM(2014) 254/2 (13 May 2014)**
20. **The importance of equipping young people to use space data was highlighted by the EU Competitiveness Council (26-27 May 2016) and during European Space Solutions Week (30 May– 3 June 3 2016) and reflected in the draft Council conclusions on the “Digital Single Market Technologies and Public Services Modernisation” package**
21. **The European Skills Council - Textile Clothing Leather & Footwear:** <http://europeanskillsCouncil.t-c-l.eu/>
22. **Knowledge Platform for Transferring Research and Innovation in Footwear:** <http://knowledge4foot.eu/>
23. **“Leather is my job” project:** <http://www.euroleather.com/index.php/news-activities/177-leather-is-my-job-follow-up>
24. **Textile and Clothing Knowledge Alliance (TECLO) project:** <http://teclo.eu/>
25. **European Jobs Network (EURES):** <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/homepage>
26. **The Tourism Business Portal:** http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/tourism-business-portal/index_en.htm
27. **Westcott, J. “Improving information on accessible tourism for disabled people”, European Commission, Luxembourg. (2004): 2013:** <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/improving-information-on-accessible-tourism-for-disabled-people-pbNB6004587/>
28. **European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO):** <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>
29. **EURES Drop'Pin Service:** <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/droppin/>
30. **Call for proposals, 2016, on “Enhancing quality jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships in the tourism sector across Europe”:** http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8757&lang=en&title=Enhancing-quality-jobs%2Capprenticeships-and-traineeships-in-the-tourism-sector-across-Europe

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The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills is a new framework for strategic cooperation to address short and medium-term skills needs in a given economic sector. The publication outlines how stakeholders (businesses, trade unions, public authorities, research, education and training institutions etc.) can apply the framework to address sectoral challenges, illustrating the steps towards delivering sector-specific skills solutions through sectoral partnerships.

The Blueprint currently focuses on six pilot sectors including: Automotive; Defence; Maritime Technology; Space (geo-information); Textile, Clothing, Leather & Footwear (TCLF); and Tourism. It will be extended to additional sectors in the future.

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