Belgium's (digital) skills challenge

Going Local Belgium 11 June 2015

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European Commission DG CONNECT

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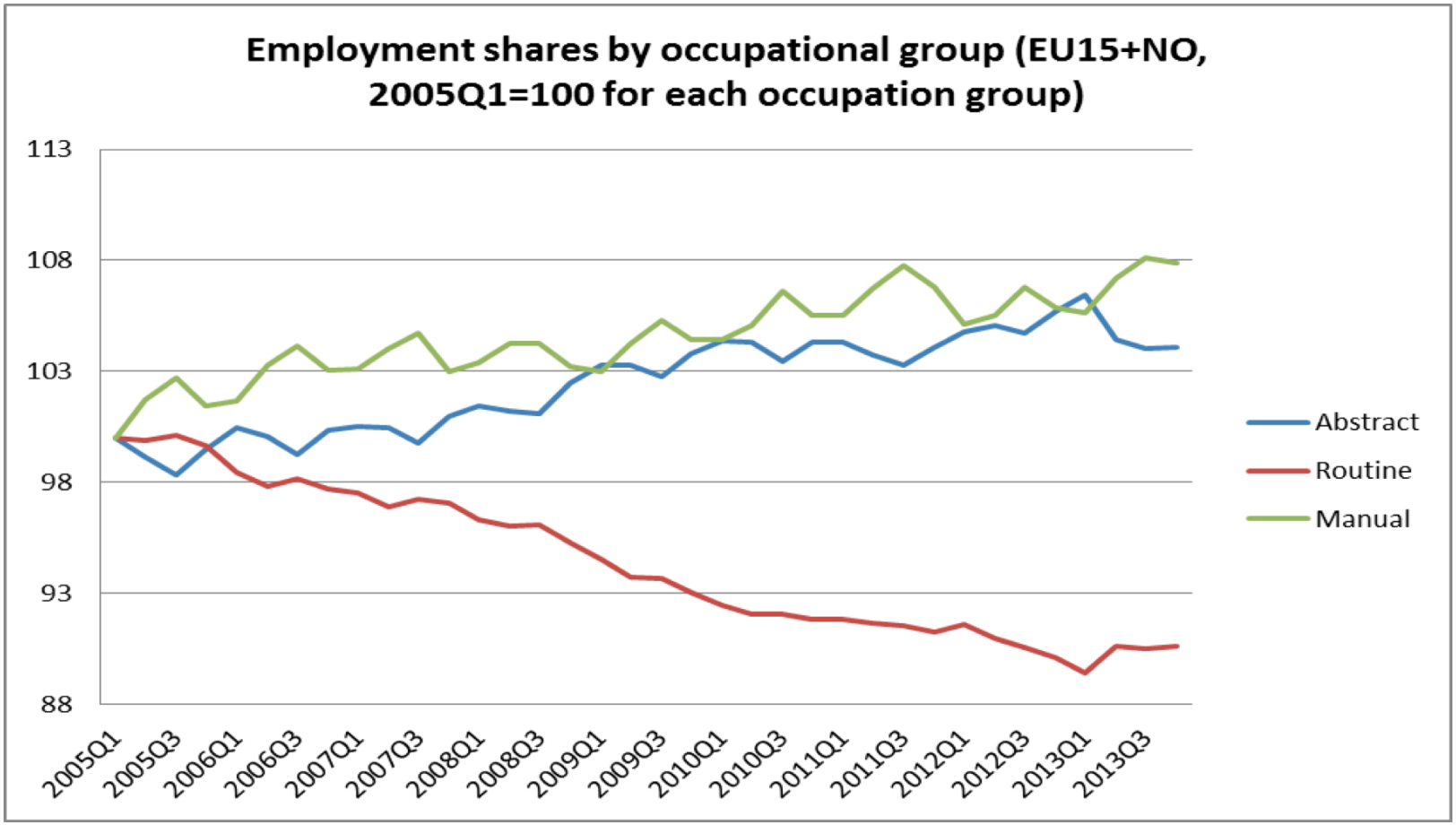
Begun, the
Talent War has!


Employment shares by occupational group (EU15+NO, 2005Q1=100 for each occupation group)
113
108
103
98
93
88
2005Q1
2005Q3
2006Q1
2006Q3
2007Q1
2007Q3
2008Q1
2008Q3
2009Q1
2009Q3
2010Q1
2010Q3
2011Q1
2011Q3
2012Q1
2012Q3
2013Q1
2013Q3
Abstract
Routine
Manual

47%

of occupational categories are at high risk of being automated

90%

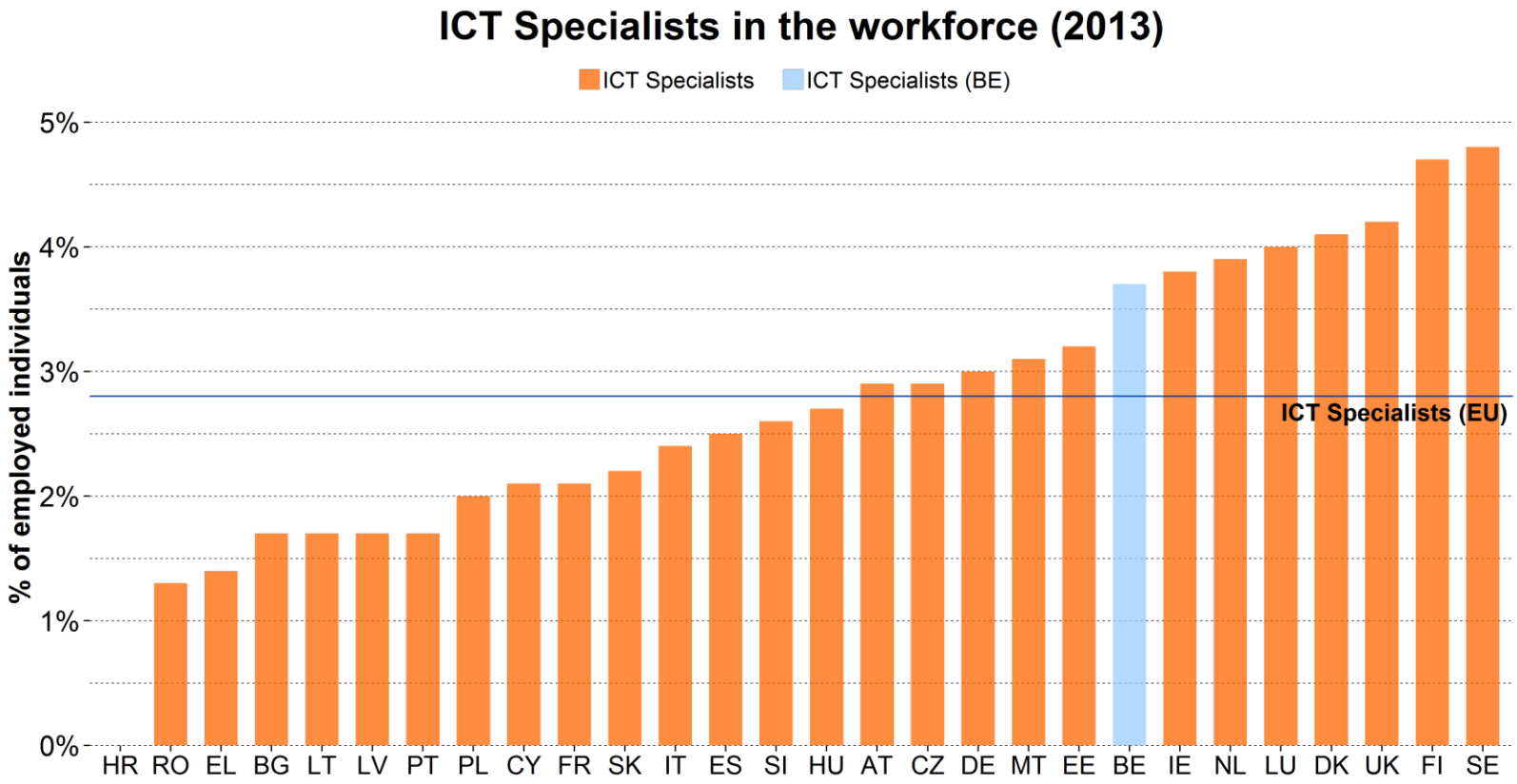
of all jobs will require at least basic ICT knowledge

37%

of all Belgians

have no or low digital skills

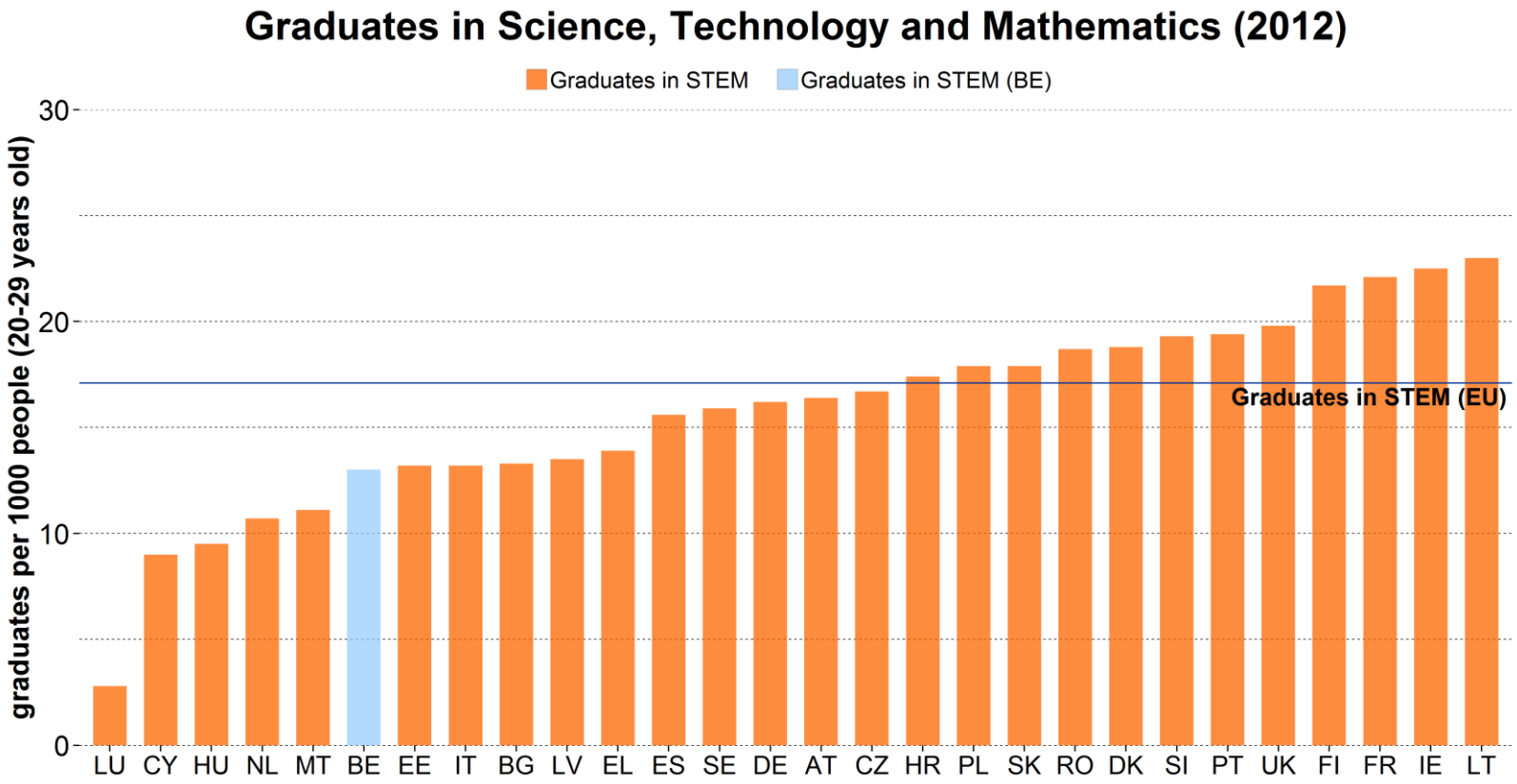
The Belgian economy relies heavily on digital technology specialists



30.000

unfilled vacancies for ICT experts in Belgium by 2020 if no decisive action is taken (forecast)

Belgium has less STEM graduates



Looking into the crystal ball (a bit)

- ***"The translation of technology into new ideas and products also hinges on the availability of a vast pool of aptly skilled workers.*** *…Shortages in these fields could become a major barrier to innovation, with shortages already emerging for certain functions. This is the case for professional digital skills, for example. Whereas Belgium has good broadband infrastructure and is above the EU average in computer and internet skills, there is a shortage of qualified ICT experts such as application developers. In 2014, 37.7% of enterprises with job vacancies requiring specialised ICT skills reported problems in filling these positions. For the ICT workforce alone, the shortfall is expected to rise from about 8 000 in 2012 to 30 000 in 2020."*

(EC Country Report for Belgium 2015)

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Companies can't find experts, and unemployed people can't find jobs. Right here in Brussels.

Isn't that crazy?

Solutions

- **Better collaboration** between businesses, education sector and training providers to reduce gaps and mismatches:
  - **Improve skills forecasting and adapt curricula**
  - **Motivate young people to go for digital technology**
  - **Provide more relevant trainings**

=> *Towards a national digital skills alliance?*

Solutions

- **Education and learning**
  - **Update curricula and bring digital learning technology into schools, make learning fun and cool**
  - **Boost teacher training**
  - **Support courses on digital creativity and coding – in schools and outside**

- **Better use national and European funds** – ESF, Erasmus+, for digital skills training, including work-based training

Thank you!

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