



European Commission



NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS

#SocialRights #UpskillEU

9 April 2019

More than 61 million European adults have low qualification levels (lower secondary education at most). Around 1 out of 5 European adults struggle with basic reading and writing, calculation or using digital tools in everyday life. Without these qualifications and skills, they are at higher risk of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion.

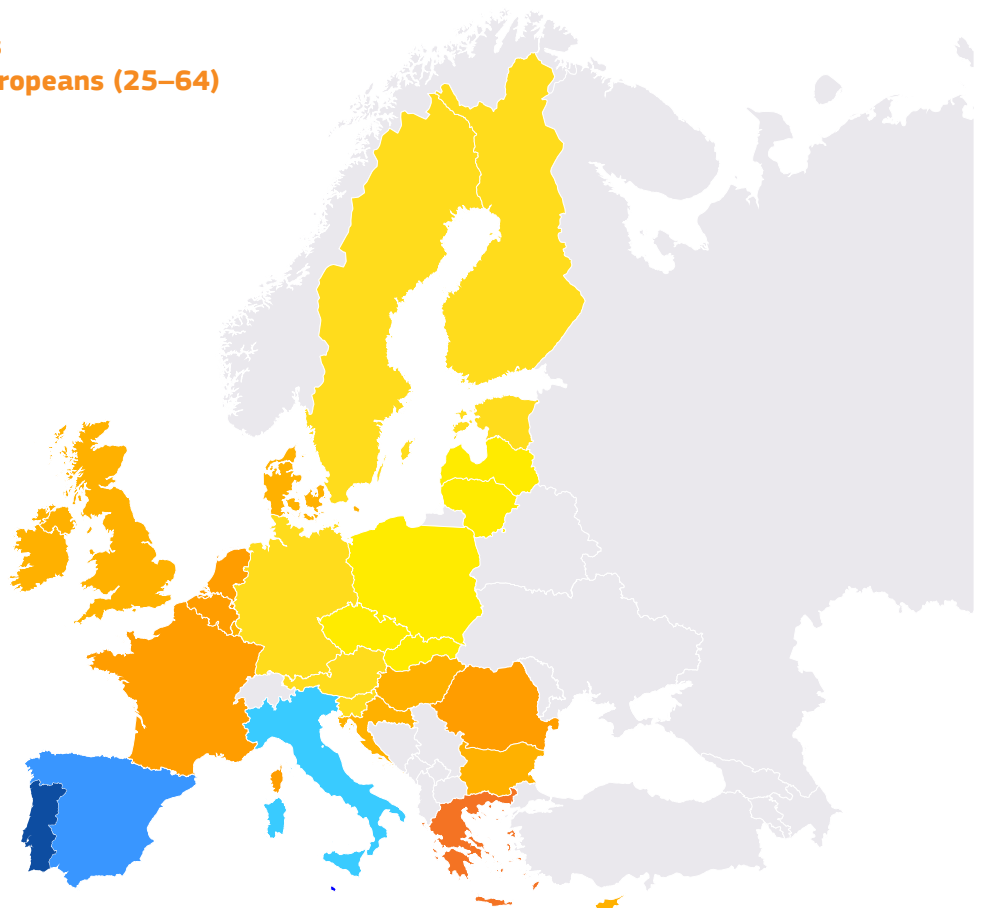
To address these challenges, a **Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways** was proposed by the European Commission and adopted by the Council of the EU. It sets out the framework to help adults acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or progress to acquire a broader set of skills and a qualification. The Recommendation is one of the key measures to implement the first principle of the **European Pillar of Social Rights**, which is about education, training and life-long learning, and it is part of the new **Skills Agenda for Europe**.

Thanks to the Recommendation, Member States committed to offer adults new and improved opportunities to boost their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Progress will be monitored regularly through the **European Semester** of policy coordination.

Share of low-qualified adults in the population of adult Europeans (25–64)

Data source: Labour Force Survey 2017

- 5% - 10%
- 11% - 15%
- 16% - 20%
- 21% - 25%
- 26% - 30%
- 31% - 35%
- 36% - 40%
- 41% - 45%
- 46% - 50%
- 51% - 55%



RECOMMENDATION ON UPSKILLING PATHWAYS

THREE-STEP APPROACH

To boost access to and take-up of quality learning opportunities, adults with low levels of skills will be able to follow a three step approach.



Step 1 – Skills assessment

Enables adults to identify their existing skills and any needs for upskilling.



Step 2 – Tailored learning offer

Enables adults to receive an offer of education and training meeting the needs identified by the skills assessment.



Step 3 – Validation and recognition

Enables adults to have the acquired skills validated and recognised.



IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

2016

Commission presents the proposal as part of the Skills Agenda for Europe

2017 onwards

Implementation of the Recommendation by the Member States

2019

Commission takes stock of implementation measures

2021

Commission reports to the Council on the implementation of the Recommendation

2016

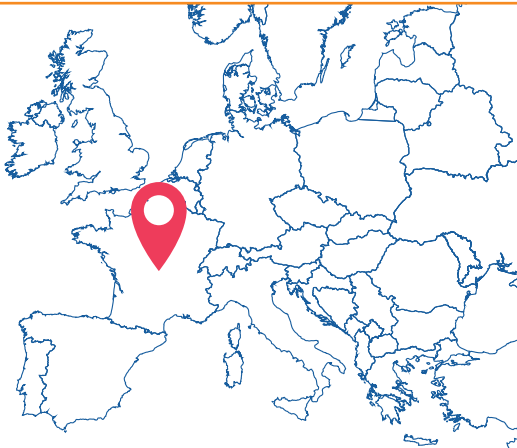
Council adopts the Recommendation

2018

Member States outline implementation measures

FIRST RESULTS

The Upskilling Pathways initiative has put the importance of investing in skills for all high on the agenda again and has given a boost to Member States' efforts in this area. Several Member States are now setting in motion ambitious programmes and pilot projects to support development of basic skills and give adults a second chance to obtain qualifications. In particular actions that focus on personalised career guidance, validation of acquired skills outside of formal employment and development of digital skills.



In **France**, a Skills Investment Plan worth €15 billion was launched in 2018 to support the upskilling and employability of **one million low-qualified jobseekers and one million young people not in employment, education or training**. €3 billion are to be spent on the fight against low levels of literacy and an emphasis has also been put on digital skills. The Plan has a strong inclusive dimension, for instance a national call for proposals “100% inclusion” aims to finance innovative experimentation to reach out to, remobilise and upskill the most vulnerable groups.

In **Germany**, the «ValiKom» project allows people that do not have a formal qualification to certify the vocational skills they acquired through various work experiences. Candidates are prepared through information and advice on the procedure and available assessment methods (role play, specialist interview, presentation of work results, case studies, work samples, etc.). Full or partial equivalence to the qualification may be awarded. Guidance and advice are provided on what may still be needed to achieve a certificate.



The **Czech** Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has launched in 2017 the development of an online system to promote digital competences for employees and jobseekers. The aim is to enable them to self-assess their level of digital skills. Following this assessment, they will then be able to undertake tailored training to upskill. The project also aims to map relevant training opportunities and create regional training programmes. The online tool will also propose recommendations to improve digital competences of the workforce, for instance among senior workers. Thousands of Czech citizens are expected to benefit from this initiative up to 2021.



EU SUPPORT TO UPSKILL AND RESKILL ADULTS (2014–2020)

European Social Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At least €27.3 billion is specifically allocated to vocational training and access to lifelong learning for all age groups. <p>By now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 7.1 million low-qualified participants receive support from ESF (55% of all people supported by ESF). ▶ 7.95 million participants (25+) receive support from ESF (62% of all people supported from ESF). ▶ 1.65 million participants gained a qualification. ▶ 843 522 participants in education and training after leaving the ESF project.
Erasmus+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ More than 1 600 projects support adult education.
EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mutual learning activities organised to support Member States in preparing and implementing the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation. ▶ €1 132 166.14 spent in 2017 on four projects (IT, EL, RS, NL) laying the ground for Upskilling Pathways implementation. ▶ €5 million available in the 2018 and 2019 budget to further support the implementation.
Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In 2019, three projects will be supported that develop policies for low-skilled or low-qualified adults (in Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands).

COMMISSION PROPOSAL FOR THE NEXT LONG-TERM EU BUDGET (2021–2027)

The Commission proposes that the future long-term budget will also support upskilling and reskilling of adults:

European Social Fund (ESF+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ €101.2 billion to invest in people and equip them with the right skills to deal with the changing labour market.
Erasmus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Double the current Erasmus+ budget, strengthening opportunities to support the upskilling and reskilling of adults.
InvestEU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ €4 billion “Social Investments and Skills” window to attract finance in order to support projects with a positive social impact.
Digital Europe programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ €9.2 billion to align the next multi-year EU budget with increasing digital challenges, including skills development.