

**Fact File****Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)*****The question of skills mismatch in the European Union***

*The issue of skills mismatch in the EU's internal market has been increasing. According to OECD reports, approximately 80 million European workers possess skills that are incompatible with their jobs, leading to either overqualification or underqualification.*

*How can educational policies across the EU adapt to the changing environment of the EU's internal market? What changes can be introduced to schools and universities to ensure an effective absorption into the job market?*

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**Key Terms:**

1. **Skills Mismatch**: The discrepancy between the skills possessed by workers and the skills required by the job market, leading to inefficiencies in employment.
2. **Overqualification**: A situation where a worker has higher skills or qualifications than necessary for their current job, often resulting in underutilization of their capabilities.
3. **Underqualification**: A condition where a worker lacks the necessary skills or qualifications required for their job, potentially impacting their performance and productivity.
4. **Labor Market Alignment**: The process of ensuring that the skills and qualifications provided by the education system match the current and future demands of the labour market, facilitating effective employment.

**Brief Introduction:**

The EU's internal market is facing a growing challenge of skills mismatch, with OECD reports indicating that around 80 million European workers are either overqualified or underqualified for their jobs. This misalignment of skills impacts productivity and economic growth, necessitating urgent educational reforms.

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The committee is tasked with exploring and recommending educational policy adaptations across the EU to address this skills mismatch. This includes identifying effective changes to be implemented in schools and universities to better align educational outcomes with labour market needs, ensuring that graduates possess the relevant skills for current and future job demands. The committee will consider innovative curricula, enhanced vocational training, and stronger partnerships between educational institutions and industries to foster an effective transition from education to employment.

### **Bodies and stakeholders:**

1. The EMPL Committee is in charge of the relations with 5 agencies:
  - a. European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop): Supports the development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contributes to their implementation.
  - b. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound): Provides knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies in the EU.
  - c. European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA): The EU's information agency for occupational safety and health. Their work contributes to the European Commission's Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027 and other relevant EU strategies and programmes.
  - d. European Training Foundation (ETF): Helps EU neighbouring countries to reform their education and training systems as part of EU external relations policies. By supporting human capital development, the ETF contributes to social and economic development and long-term stability in neighbouring countries.
  - e. European Labour Authority (ELA): Ensures that EU rules on labour mobility and social security coordination are enforced in a fair and effective way and makes it easier for citizens and businesses to reap the benefits of the internal market.
2. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):

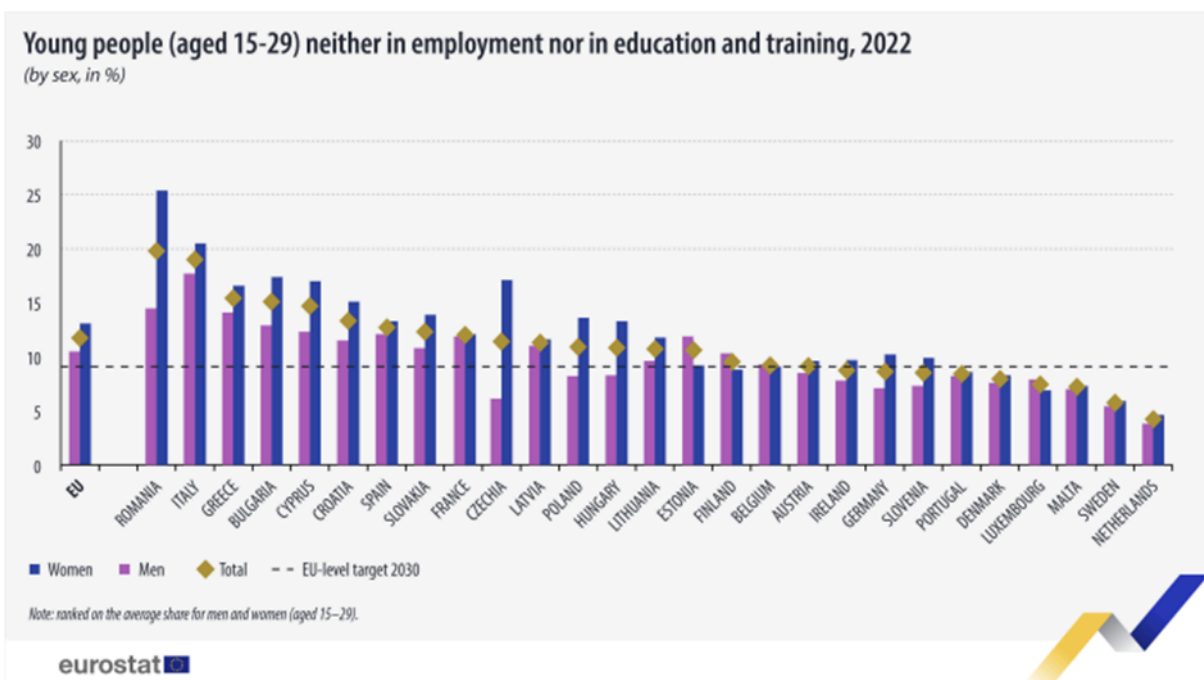
International organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. Their goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all. Together with governments, policy makers and citizens, they work on establishing evidence-based international standards and finding solutions to a range of social, economic and environmental challenges.

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**Measures already in place:**

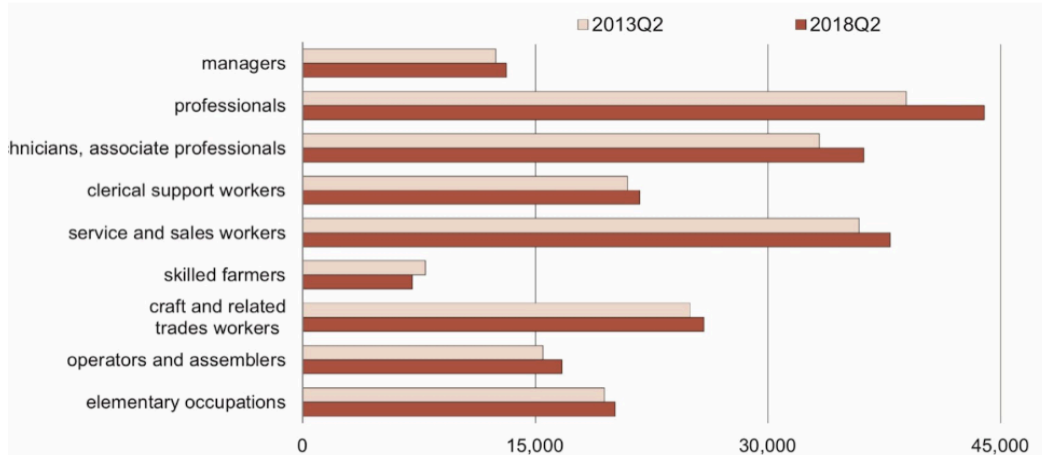
1. MEPs call for strengthening of the ELA's competences: In the resolution, MEPs call on the European Commission, as part of its assessment of the ELA's mandate and operational capacity, to make a proposal for a revision of the Founding regulation of the ELA - Regulation (EU) 2019/1149 - which strengthens the powers and competences of the ELA, thus its added value for national authorities.  
([https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2024-0059\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2024-0059_EN.html))
2. AMENDMENTS 1 - 34 - Draft report Quality traineeships in the EU:  
([https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-AM-746998\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-AM-746998_EN.pdf))
3. Horizon Europe - Skills2Capabilities: The EU-funded SKILLS2CAPABILITIES project is about understanding how skills systems need to develop if they are to assist people in making labour market transitions - i.e. between jobs, employers or sectors – and thereby reduce the level of skills mismatch which might otherwise arise.  
(<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094758>, <https://www.skills2capabilities.eu/index.html>)

**Useful data and information:**



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2.9 Occupational structure in the EU28, age 15-64 (in thousands)

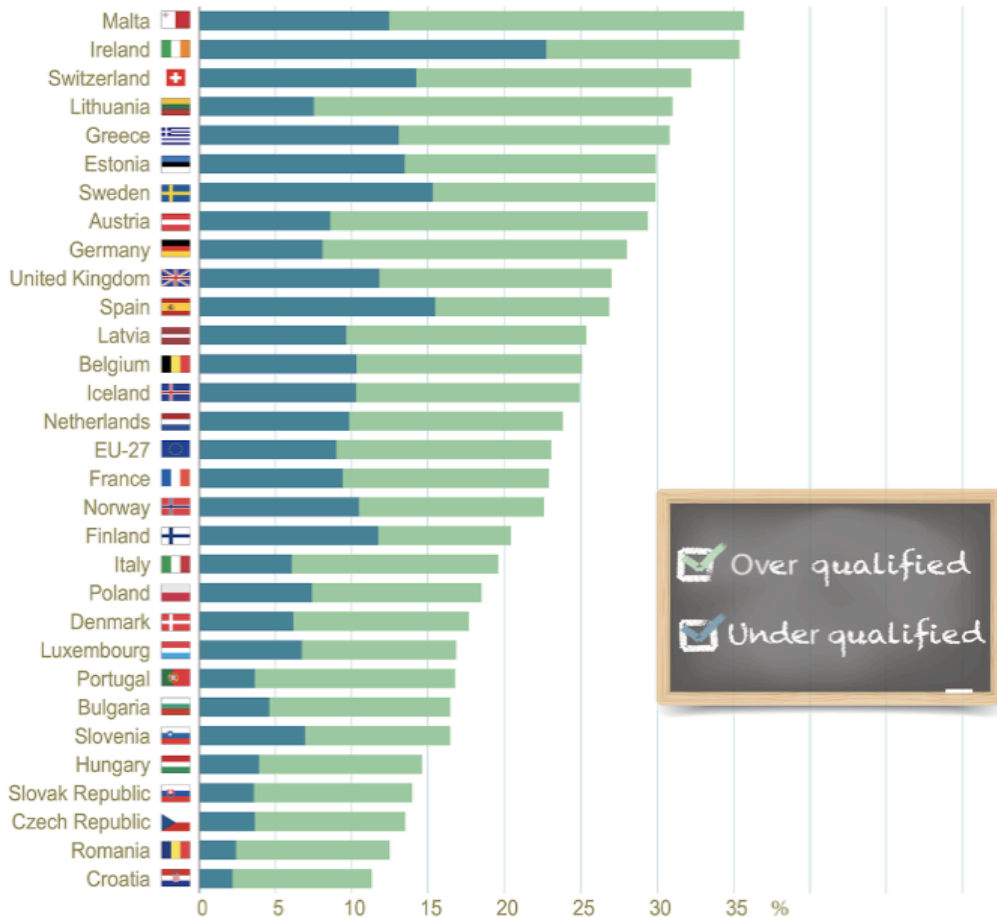


Eurostat [lfsq\_egais].

## Do you have the right skills for your job?

Qualification mismatch in Europe, as a percentage of total employment, 2013

Source: C



Note: Workers are classified as under-qualified (over-qualified) if their educational attainment (four categories) is lower (higher) than the modal educational attainment of workers in their occupation within the country.

Illustration: Shutterstock

Source: OECD calculations based on the European Labour Force Survey (2013)

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