Supply and demand of skills: forecast reveals national variations within common European trends

Skills supply and demand in Europe: medium-term forecast up to 2020, published today by Cedefop, shows that while general trends are common throughout Europe, there are substantial differences among Member States.

The report updates Cedefop’s 2007-08 forecasts with improved data and methods, and includes the medium-term impact of the economic crisis. Developments in the skills supply are categorised by age, gender and country; the demand for skills, by qualification, occupation, economic sector and country.

The skills supply: what qualifications will the European workforce have?

For nearly all countries, the share of the workforce with high qualifications is projected to be greater in 2020 than in 2010; the share of people with low qualifications is generally projected to fall. Taken together, shares of medium- and high-skilled people are converging across Europe. But the share of those with medium-level qualifications shows greater variation between countries. National forecasts on the supply of skills are shown in Figures 1-2 below.

The demand for skills: what jobs will be available across Europe?

The need to replace departing workers (“replacement demand”) means that even occupations with net job losses will remain viable sources of employment - a total of about 73 million jobs. Net employment change (“expansion demand”) in 2010-2020 is expected to add over 7 million new jobs, mostly in knowledge- and skill- intensive occupations (high-level managerial, professional and technical jobs). In terms of expansion demand, however, some occupations will experience losses. The total number of job openings (replacement plus expansion) is forecast at around 80 million, bringing total employment in 2020 to slightly less than its peak in 2008.

National forecasts on the demand for skills are shown in Figure 3

The complete forecast will be disseminated at the Spanish Presidency conference New Skills for New Jobs for a more competitive Europe (Barcelona 8/9 April).

Download the forecast
**Figure 1** - Skills supply. Projected change in the labour force by qualification and by country, 2010-20.

Source: Cedefop - Figure 14 in the full text of the forecast

**Figure 2** - Skills supply: Incidence of medium and high qualifications in the labour force by country. Projected level 2010 (%) and change in percentage points 2010-2020

Source: Cedefop - Figure 15 in the full text of the forecast.
Some projected changes by sector across the EU:

- Demand for service occupations such as sales, security, catering and caring will **increase** by more than two million.
- Demand for office clerks will **decrease** by around a million.
- Over four million job **losses** are projected for skilled manual workers.
- An **increase** of around two million is forecast for the demand for elementary occupations.

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