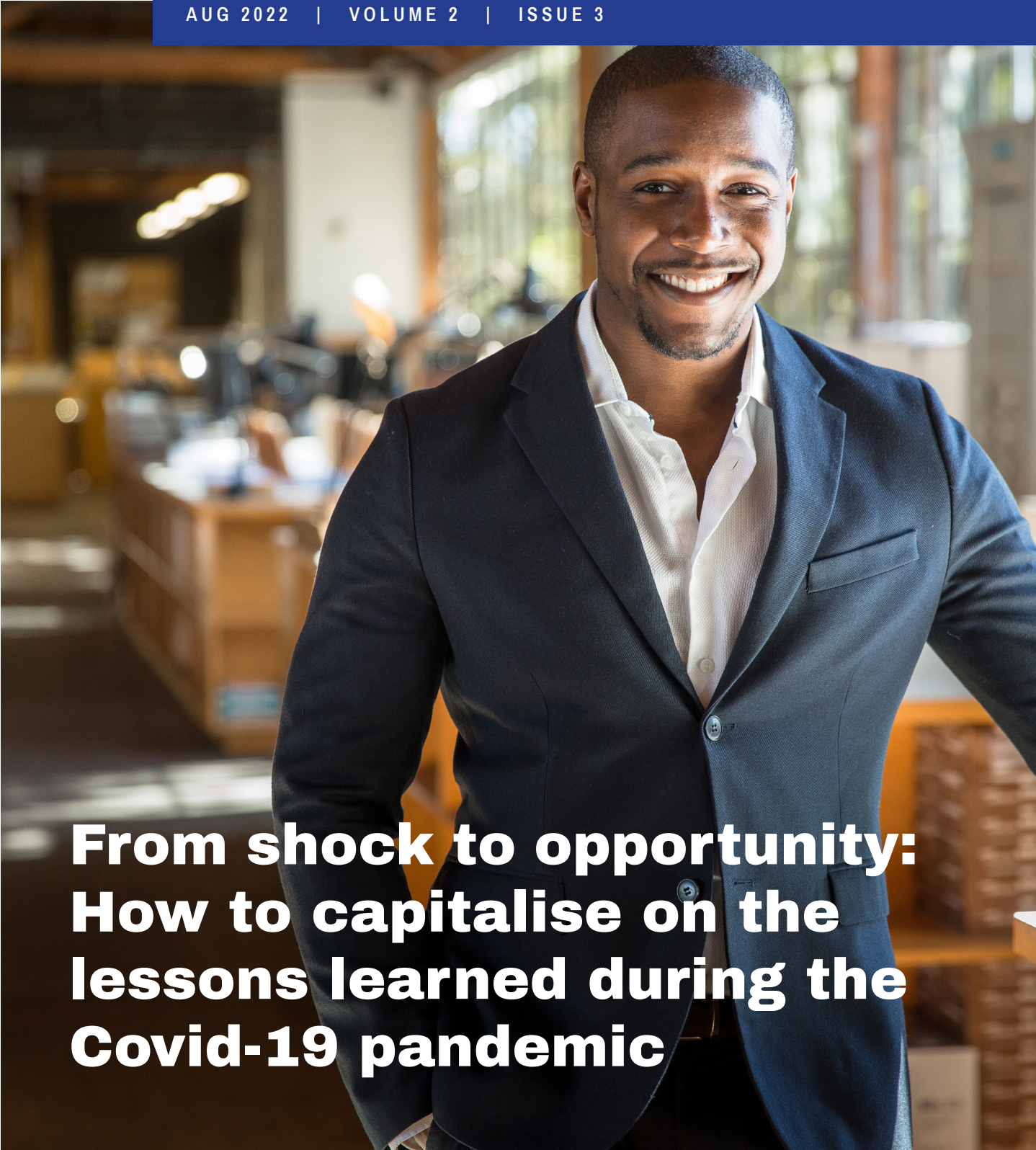


 A GRANTS OFFICE PUBLICATION

# FUNDED

EUROPE

AUG 2022 | VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 3



**From shock to opportunity:  
How to capitalise on the  
lessons learned during the  
Covid-19 pandemic**



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# Dear Readers

If you have ever been involved in hiring processes in your current or previous jobs, you know how difficult it can be to find the right candidate. As jobs and requirements for these positions change, it's expected to become increasingly difficult. The environment in which businesses operate is changing rapidly, but they don't always have the right skills to adapt at the same rate.

All member states of the European Union have acknowledged these issues and are currently putting in place a number of mechanisms and measures to develop the skills of the European workforce. We examine these measures in this issue, specifically funding, and assess them according to the business needs we identify.

The cover story of this issue, by Marie-Christine Noujaim, examines how the French government is implementing France Relance to strive for a digital society that meets most societal needs. We will uncover that there is ample funding available for such objectives, however, we see a lack of attention to human-centric aspects of workforce development.

There is a human facet to these workforce development aspirations which are being examined in both the Dutch article "Het Arbeidspotentieel & De Toekomst Van Werk" and the article by Vanessa Del Pozo Sánchez titled "Workplace culture as an innovation tool for better business results". Both articles consider the question of whether we aren't missing some dimensions of the new realities of work and the workforce expected to perform in them.

In this edition, we'd like to share with you an article from our colleagues down under in Australia. For those new to the Grants Office, it is one of our major offices across the globe, providing grants assistance. In this case, whilst some programs may not be immediately relevant, we want to demonstrate the far-reaching impact of European workforce development initiatives and provide some comparative insights into an alternate workforce development funding landscape.

Kind regards,

Gregory Clare  
Editor

## GRANTS OFFICE EUROPE IS NOW ON TWITTER AND LINKEDIN!

Grants Office has built a leading reputation in grants intelligence in the United States. Over the past year, we have taken that expertise internationally. With the help of our team of locals and native speakers, we recognise that the European cultural, legal, and economic context shapes policies related to funding and creates a particularly European grant landscape. To that end, we offer our clients and partners tailor-made grant education and intelligence, such as you find here, in our quarterly magazine *Funded*, and ongoingly on our social media platforms.

Give us a follow on [Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#) to find the latest in European funding as well as information on webinars, and more.



# From shock to opportunity: How to capitalise on the lessons learned during the Covid-19 pandemic

Marie-Christine Noujaim

## THE COHESION PILLAR OF “FRANCE RELANCE” FRENCH RECOVERY PLAN

On the 3rd of September 2020, the French Government unveiled the historical recovery plan “[France Relance](#)”, with more than €100 billion on the table. The plan is based on three main pillars: the environment, competitiveness, and social and territorial cohesion. The measures aim at enabling France not only to emerge from the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic on the short-term but also to grow and be better prepared for various future challenges.

The social and territorial cohesion component of the “France Relance” plan includes measures for workforce development. It is oriented towards employment safeguards, youth support and disability and vocational training, with a budget of over €15 billion. The training strategy in this pillar is mainly articulated around grants for the training of jobseekers, grants for young people and employees in part-time work, as well as easier access to retraining and the modernisation of training bodies via the [FNE-Formation](#)\* and the transition [CPF](#)\*\*.

Since the Covid-19 crisis, the [French Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration](#) has been mobilised for the massive deployment of distanced training methods to :

- enable jobseekers to start new training courses entirely remotely, within the framework of a national market launched by Pôle emploi on behalf of the French State;
- ensure the continuity of training courses that have already begun, thanks to the provision of distance learning tools and content for training organisations and [CFAs](#).



*For Many, the Covid-19 crisis initiated a reconsideration of professional life. For some employees, periods of partial work activity during the pandemic were an opportunity to take time for themselves and to reflect on their work-life balance.*

## THE LINK BETWEEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETAL INCLUSION

French society faced many unprecedented challenges during the Covid-19 crisis, not least the fact that employers had no choice but to deploy remote-working, as well as workforce development e-training, to compensate for the work hours that could not be fulfilled due to lockdown constraints. This new reality brought a new challenge for the employment sector in France: how to face digital inequalities and fight digital illiteracy in the workforce. Today, according to the French [Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration](#), 13 million French people say they are disconnected from the digital world: they either do not use the Internet at all or use it very little, and they feel they have difficulty with its functions. However, 76% of French people say they are ready to adopt new technologies. The Government’s ambition is to work toward the creation of an innovative, inclusive and human digital society in order to guarantee access to public services for all.

\* The training aid offered as part of the National Employment Fund (FNE-Formation) is an aid package for companies to enable them to set up vocational training measures for their employees in order to encourage the strengthening of their skills.

\*\* Nearly 1 million CPF training courses have been deployed in 2020, according to a study by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration's statistics department.

The recovery plan is undoubtedly inspired by the ideal of solidarity which makes it possible to better financially support and accompany the most vulnerable employees, including people with disabilities, youth and old people with fragile personal situations:

- The “France Relance” plan has made significant financial commitments, in particular a €320 million recovery plan for inclusion for nearly 5 000 inclusive organisations (4 000 structures of insertion by economic activity (SIAE) and 800 adapted enterprises (EA)). Moreover, the recovery and resilience measures increased the support for the companies which employ people with disabilities.
- A series of measures proposed by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration also benefit from additional credits from the France recovery plan to support young people who are looking for a job by building tailor-made integration paths as part of the “[1 young person, 1 solution](#)” plan.
- Additionally, the plan includes a sound national strategy for digital inclusion to combat the digital divide among the French population. This strategy has three main components:
  1. Equipping and training care-providers (social workers, volunteers, public service agents, etc.) to support through digital tools people in their care who are unable to live independently through digital tools and also provide answers to digital emergencies;
  2. Enabling people to take training courses with accredited professionals in their geographical area by funding these courses and supporting the proliferation of organisations offering this type of activity (digital public spaces, third places, France Services, libraries, social centres, etc.);
  3. Supporting the initiatives of local and regional authorities, who are best placed to implement coherent and coordinated actions adapted to the needs of local residents.

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC AND STRATEGIES ORIENTED TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Covid-19 crisis has profoundly changed the concept of professional training in France and has triggered widespread reflection on professional life. For some employees, the days of only partial work activity were an opportunity to take time for themselves and to reflect on their work-life balance. For others, this period offered an occasion to consider the sacrifices they used to make for their jobs. At the same time, employees who seized the opportunities given to them by their employers participated in workforce development training, in which they were supported by national recovery plan grants to improve their skills and look forward towards a brighter evolution in their career path. Moreover, the “new” reality of workforce development has encouraged a more inclusive and human digital society. In a way, the shock of the crisis has accelerated an already existing trend towards digital training and “non-stop learning”, while allowing employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance and supporting productivity outside the “physical” perimeter of the workplace.

“The simple act of paying positive attention to people has a great deal to do with productivity”, according to Tom Peters, an American writer on business management practices. This is why it can be said that the reinforcement of workforce development measures and strategic objectives—alongside the dismantling of inequalities and support for inclusion—has unlocked the door for a brighter era for work and for society as a whole in France.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marie-Christine Noujaim is the Lead Grants Development Consultant for France at Grants Office Europe. She graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Management in 2013. In 2016, she received her Master of Research in Management. From 2017 to 2021, she was enrolled in a PhD program at Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté; her thesis was entitled “The practice of diversity in companies: a quest for efficiency or legitimacy?” She has participated in several EU-funded projects and has spoken at various international webinars, including the TandEM webinar “Empowering Youth as agents of integration and social cohesion and the Grants Office Europe webinar on the key measures of the French recovery plan.

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## EU Programme Snapshot

# European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)



## SUMMARY

The European Social Fund + (ESF+) is the European Union (EU)'s main instrument for investing in people.

With a budget of almost €99.3 billion for the period 2021-2027, the ESF+ provides an important contribution to the EU's employment, social, education and skills policies, including structural reforms in these areas.

Support under the ESF+ is mainly managed by the EU Member States, with the European Commission playing a supervisory role.

Funding therefore takes place through:

- [The shared management strand](#) - implemented by Member States in partnership with the Commission. These resources have a budget of roughly EUR 98.5 billion for the programming period 2021-2027 ;
- [The Employment and Social Innovation \(EaSI\) Strand](#) - implemented by the Commission with a budget of close to € 762 million for 2021-2027.

\*The EU Member States are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

## ELIGIBILITY

The ESF+ finances the implementation of the principles from the [European Pillar for Social Rights](#) and focuses on a number of priority areas, including:

- supporting young people who have been particularly affected by the socioeconomic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic by providing resources to help them get a qualification, a quality job and improve their education and skills;
- helping children in need by allocating resources to targeted actions aimed at combating child poverty and supporting the most vulnerable in society suffering from job losses and income reductions, including with the provision of food and basic material assistance to the most deprived;
- reskilling and upskilling people for the transition to a green and digital economy and improving the quality of education and training systems;
- promoting gender equality, equal opportunities and non-discrimination;
- building capacity for social partners and civil-society organisations;
- promoting social innovation across the EU through transnational cooperation;
- providing direct support to social innovation through the EaSI strand.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en>

# Workforce Development initiatives in the Down Under

**Anna Terziman**

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the number of unemployed people seeking work has fallen from 2.2 million in 2021 to 1.8 million in 2022. However, in the age of digitalisation, the need for more skilled workers and an educated workforce is in higher demand, creating a skills gap between the existing workforce and the needed workforce. Some of the current barriers to work include 1) skills mismatch – finding the right people with the appropriate skillset has become difficult, 2) poor health – a lot of people are still recovering from the impacts of COVID-19, 3) long-term unemployment as a result of initial job loss and lack of skills following this, 4) access to childcare & transport has been cited as a long-term impact of not returning to work for new parents, as well as 5) demographic changes and the impacts of the ageing population on the workforce.

In recognition of this, as part of the [National Skills Agreement](#) (NSA), the Australian Government has provisioned for an additional AUD \$3.7 billion (2.5 billion EUR) as part of the 2023-23 budget, in addition to the \$8.3 billion spent on the Workforce Development Specific Purpose Payment. This funding is intended to transform the way all state government support vocational education and training, making it consistent across the board. Comparatively to Europe, this is on par with funding seen in Germany and Spain, where funding for workforce development, adult education, and skills development is equally high.

## SKILL SHORTAGES

Although skill gaps exist in everywhere in Australia, sectors taking the biggest hits include technology, trades, construction, engineering, HR, and mining. This is not including the 265 priority jobs with future demand identified by the National Skills Commission [Skills Priority List](#), and 153 jobs in demand right now. At least 64% of organisations in Australia say skills shortages are impacting the current effective operations of their organisation or department, which in turn is impeding post-pandemic growth and realisation of most businesses, especially those relying on low-skilled workers and migrants.



*According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the number of unemployed people seeking work has fallen from 2.2 million in 2021 to 1.8 million in 2022.*



## ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

At the same time, highly skilled workers are also moving out of their current roles to pursue other ambitions and avenues of employment. When combined with the already existing skills shortage, this is starting to become a real problem for most companies. This is exacerbated by the long-reaching impacts of COVID-19, the rolling restrictions imposed by the government, staff burnout, and promises of promotions and salary rises failing to meet expectations. Finally, the need for a work-life balance, increased mental health and wellbeing, and the promise of early retirement is also adding to the current skills shortage.

## LOOKING FORWARD

As lifelong learning becomes an educational necessity, educational structures and financial aid models will need to adapt to enable engagement at different point in an individual's life. This includes upskilling and re-skilling modules for both unemployed and employed individuals, and incentives to retain their workers and attract new employees. Workforce development takes a 'people-first' approach to business development by offering strategies to improve an individual's potential in the workplace as well as their career trajectory. It is an ongoing process of educating and empowering workers so that they can tackle the workplace problems of tomorrow.

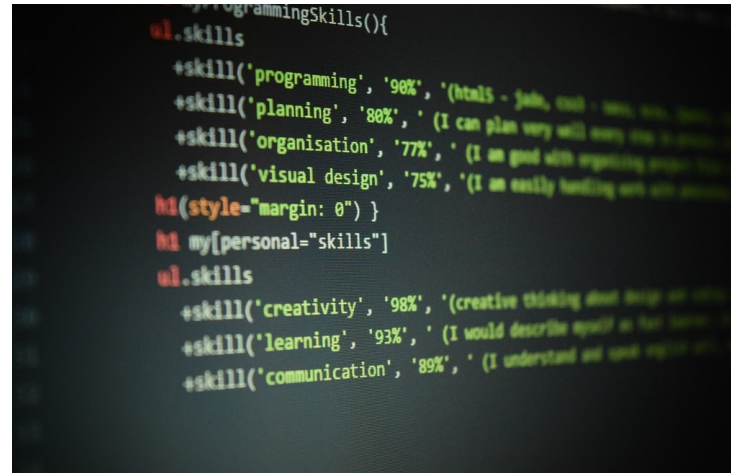
To support future workforce incentives, the newly formed Australian Government has promised to continue rebuilding skills and training, including free TAFE spots, additional university placements, new apprenticeships places, and associated fiscal incentives for companies who support this. Additionally, they have promised to provide additional support to small businesses and have committed to boosting wages growth in their new Economic Plan and Budget Strategy Statement. However, we will not see the outcomes of this before November 2022, when the new budget is released.

## CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES IN AUSTRALIA

In the interim, there are several opportunities available for workers looking to upskill themselves and their employers, looking to provide more opportunities for them. These include programs to support SMEs, entrepreneurs and various sectors in Australia, including training organisations.

### 1. Entrepreneurship support

- The [Entrepreneurship programme – Growth Grants](#) provides access to a national network for experiences facilitators to improve a business. Applicants are eligible to receive up to 50% of project costs, with a minimum grant amount of \$2,500 and a maximum of \$20,000.



*At least 64% of organisations in Australia say skills shortages are impacting the current effective operations of their organisation.*

### 2. SME support

- The [Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program](#) contains a range of both employer and employee incentives, targeting a broad range of apprenticeships and traineeships, especially in those areas significantly lacking skills.
- The Queensland Government is offering [free online training](#) to support businesses and their employees in recovering from COVID-19. These include micro-credentialing courses for a variety of sectors.

### 3. Defense and Industry support

- The [Skilling Australia's Defence Industry Grants Program](#) provides grants to businesses over the course of three years to support the development of skills within SMEs in the defence sector. Additionally, it intends to reduce the barriers faced by SMEs in the defence sector when upskilling or retraining staff. Grants range from \$5,000 to 500,000 depending on the applicant.
- [Skills Fund TAS](#) offers funding to registered RTOs to deliver training to existing Tasmanian workers, so they may develop new skills through nationally recognised training.
- The [Training Fund Authority ACT](#) provides employers, employees, and training providers in the building and construction industry with funding to help develop skills, improve culture, access training and support new workers entering the industry.

Whilst these are not extensive, the Australian population will certainly be looking forward to the new measures implemented by the new Government and the actions announced as part of the new budget at the end of 2022.





*Workforce development takes a 'people-first' approach to business development by offering strategies to improve an individual's potential in the workplace as well as their career trajectory.*

## CURRENT AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN EUROPE FOR AUSTRALIA

Australian universities, companies and researchers are involved in the EU's Horizon programmes. The EU's budget allocation to research, science and innovation is €95.5 billion over the period 2021-2027. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth.

The European Research Council, set up by the EU in 2007, is the premiere European funding organisation for excellent frontier research with more than 48 Australian researchers receiving grants to pursue their research in Europe. From 2019, Synergy grants allow Australian researchers, who are part of an EU-based team, to conduct their research in Australia.

Erasmus+ will continue as the EU's programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2021-2027. Erasmus+ funding of over €26.2 billion will support various projects for institutions and scholarships for individuals worldwide including Australia.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anna Terziman is the research associate at Grants Office's Global branch. Her role involves tracking global funding trends and opportunities across all sectors, with her specialty being workforce development.

# UK Shared Prosperity: The Future of Local Skills Funding across the UK

William Bond

## LEVELLING UP LOCALLY

It has been five years since Theresa May first promised a United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (or UKSPF) as one of her key 2017 manifesto pledges. The goal of the UKSPF then was to replace EU structural funding, including the [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#), in order to support growth, and reduce inequalities across the country. The UKSPF has now, finally, been launched, and [the prospectus](#) laying out its delivery structure and strategic goals was published in April.

The UKSPF is set to be active from the current financial year until the 2024-25 financial year. For this period, £2.6 billion has been allocated to the fund—£400 million for 2022-23, £700 million for 2023-24 and £1.5 billion for 2024-25. Additionally, a portion of these allocations, totalling £559 million across the three-year period up to 2024-25, has already been set aside to fund Multiply, the government's UK-wide adult numeracy programme.

The fund has direct consequences for how upskilling, training, and workforce development will be supported over the next three years: the government has said the three priorities to be addressed by the UKSPF are “communities and place”, “support for local businesses”, and “people and skills.” Each of these priorities is theoretically aligned with three or more of the government's [Levelling Up Missions](#), which are in essence broad targets for social and infrastructure development to be achieved by 2030. It is worth viewing the Shared Prosperity Fund through the lens of these missions. All three UKSPF priorities are intended to support an improvement in people's pride in place (especially in local community). In addition, they are expected to help meet objectives such as an increase in Health Life Expectancy (HLE) and well-being, a rise in productivity, pay and employment and, crucially, a rise in the number of people completing skills training.

As with a great deal of official communication concerning the Levelling Up agenda, it can be difficult to find, amidst the broad-stroke ambitions, a sense of how the funding will be accessed in practice; who and what will be eligible for funding, and when will we see the fund in operation? So, let's begin by diving into the detail surrounding the delivery structure of the fund. As we shall see, one of the complexities of the UKSPF—and one of the ways in which it differs from ERDF and even other UK stimulus packages such as the Levelling Up Fund—is in its revisionary view of the UK's political geography.







## CONTINUITY WITH EU FUNDING AND THE NEW DELIVERY GEOGRAPHY

Regarding the stated goal of replacing EU structural funds with the shared prosperity fund, there has already been some consternation about what appears to be a reduction in funding levels. You may have already seen some of the complaints from the [IFS](#), the devolved administrations and several English mayors. The Scottish government, for example, reacted to the prospectus by arguing that [Scotland's UKSPF allocations for 2022-23 are £151 million short](#) of the EU funding they are designed to replace. As SPICe, the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, [has explained in detail](#), there are several reasons for the discrepancy between the UK government's figures and those of the Scottish government. A key issue they note is that behind the UK government's reduced allocations for 2022-23 and 2023-24 is the expectation that certain EU funds will continue to be available in parts of the UK through to the end of 2024 though, as SPICe point out, the government's precise assumptions about these remaining funds (i.e., how much remains and where it is available) have not been made clear.

In terms of the experience of grant-seeking, changes in levels of funding are important but perhaps not the most significant factor. Rather, it is the government's approach to the geography of funding distribution that may well be the key takeaway from the prospectus. One of the government's stated aims in designing the fund's delivery structure is to empower local communities to choose how best to invest funding for themselves. The idea, then, is that the funding is distributed for specific initiatives not by central government, but by local government. These initiatives can be in the form of grant programmes aimed at public or private organisations, the commissioning of third-party organisations, procurement activities, in-house provision of services, or loan programmes. Every part of the UK has been allocated a set amount of funding ([these amounts have been published](#) with the fund prospectus). In England, Scotland and

Wales, these allocations will be granted directly to what the government is calling lead local authorities, while for Northern Ireland, the fund will be directly administered by UK central government.

Lead local authorities in Great Britain will receive their allocations once they have submitted investment plans detailing how they intend to use and distribute the funds. The window to submit these plans closes in August and the first actual allocations will be made in October. In other words, the real launch of the UKSPF is very much still ongoing.

In some places, the lead local authority will be a unitary authority or lower tier authority. In parts of England with Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), the MCA will take the lead, while in London, it will be the Greater London Authority (GLA). Local authorities are also being encouraged to work together to deliver trans-regional initiatives where appropriate. In Scotland, by contrast, individual local authorities are expected to collaborate within Regional Economic Partnerships, such as the Aberdeen City Region and Glasgow City Region, which already operate to a degree as distinct partnerships for the purpose of the [Scottish City Region Deals](#). Similarly, in Wales, four regional partnerships have been designated as delivery vehicles.

One effect of the use of the so-called regional economic partnerships in Scotland and Wales is to ensure that responsibility for funding is located neither simply at the local level (at the level of individual local authorities) nor at the level of the devolved administrations. The UK government is keen to position this decision as the result of collaboration with devolved administrations in the design of the fund; but there has already been some disquiet about the relative marginalisation of devolved governments in the fund's structure. The charity and think tank, the [Institute for Welsh Affairs \(IWA\)](#) [noted](#), for example, that the UKSPF delivery structure in practice has no formal role either for the Welsh government or for members of the Senedd, going so far as to call the fund a "deliberate retrenchment of devolution to Wales."



## WHAT GRANT-SEEKERS CAN EXPECT

What all this means in practice for grant-seekers—and in particular, for grant programmes dedicated to upskilling workers—differs widely depending on specific local authorities' investment plans; but we can already draw some broad conclusions from the prospectus. The reliance on regional economic partnership areas may be thought of as an attempt to create in Scotland and Wales something similar to the 38 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Areas in England. The English LEP areas overlap multiple local authorities and serve, in a few cases, as inexact corollaries to Mayoral Combined Authorities. By trying to create regional (rather than local) partnership areas in Scotland and Wales, it is possible to argue—if we're being generous—the government is trying to facilitate the creation of a broader range of support programmes than would be available via a single local authority. Medium-sized businesses interested in collaborative innovation may well benefit, in this situation, from a greater range of potential partners. A potential concern for smaller businesses is that, if their new Regional Economic Partnership Area offers only one open-scope business growth support programme, there will be far more competition than for the equivalent local authority-specific programme. (Although, this issue may well be offset by a greater range of sector-specific small business programmes).

In terms of workforce development funding in particular, the picture is a somewhat complex. Although the government has said clearly that “People and Skills” are one of the fund's three key priority areas, in fact they have announced that lead local authority funding plans for the next two years should focus on investment in “Communities and Place” and “Supporting Local Business.” Interventions which address “People and Skills” will only be allowed over the next two years where current EU-funded initiatives addressing this priority area are being delivered by the voluntary or community sector. This does not mean, however, that we won't see grant programmes or other support schemes aimed at training or workforce development. Among the [suggested interventions](#) for local authorities in England that come under the remit of “Supporting Local Business” are funding for new training hubs and support for [Made Smarter Adoption programmes](#). (The latter are government schemes which aim to support manufacturing SMEs within specific English regions—the North West, North East, Yorkshire, and the West Midlands—in adopting digital technology through grant funding, training and expert advice.)

Other suggested UKSPF interventions to support local businesses include, in Wales, funding to enable the “progression of small businesses into productive medium sized firms,” and in Scotland, “support for new and existing businesses and start-ups aligned with local, regional and Scottish policy.” The likelihood is that tailored grant programmes designed to fund training and reskilling will form a part of many local authority investment plans on the grounds that workforce development is a crucial part of the progression and growth of all small businesses and start-ups.

To date, plenty of local authorities and partnerships have successfully run grant programmes with EU structural funds, aimed at helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) train and upskill their workforce. Consider, for example Business Gateway Fife, who support entrepreneurs and businesses on behalf of Fife council: their [Workforce Upskilling Grant](#) currently offers ERDF funding to SMEs for highly specific workforce training to address sectors and topics such as cyber security and project management. This kind of programme will not be the primary focus of the first two years of the UKSPF, but we are likely to see programmes like this, as well as initiatives offering non-grant training workshops, as part of the support package that local authorities end up offering.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Bond is a grants consultant for Grants Office Europe, where he supports grant-seekers in the UK and Ireland in identifying government funding for various projects including and low-carbon and green transition initiatives. He received his PhD in English, which focussed on early American environmental aesthetics and thought, in 2021 from Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

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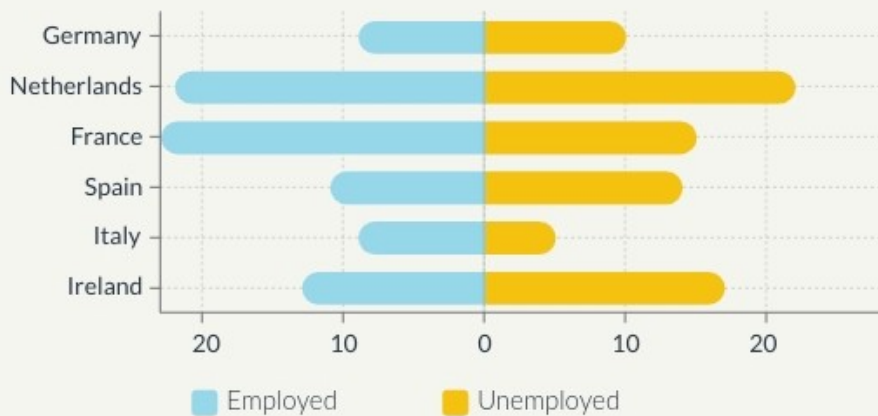


# WorkForce Development

European Union

## Adults in Education or Training

25 to 54 years



## Investments in Workforce Development

The following is a list of European grant programmes that have allocated significant resources to workforce development.

### European Social Fund +

€ 61.5 billion



Skills Development 62%  
Other 38%

### Erasmus+

€ 26.2 billion



Skills Development 62%  
Other 38%

### InvestEU

€ 372 billion



Skills Development 1%  
Other 99%

# Lavoro, formazione, produttività: perché è importante tenere conto di persone e contesti contemporaneamente.

Adele Lebano

*Quando si parla di crisi che hanno attraversato e attraversano l'Italia, si parla di salari bassi; crescita lenta; debito pubblico alto; bassa occupazione di donne e giovani*



## DI CRISI IN CRISI.

Dati e statistiche raccontano un'Italia in crisi, ancora una volta. Una crisi aggravata prima dalla pandemia e adesso dal conflitto russo-ucraino. Una crisi che diventa tratto distintivo, quasi ontologico, del Bel Paese e non semplice dato congiunturale. È una crisi perpetua ma non monolitica, assume coloriture diverse, come accade, a seconda 'degli occhi di chi guarda'. Evocata per enfatizzare che l'Italia riesce a cavarsela e persino a ripartire, per lamentare (e giustificare) le inadeguatezze nazionali, o quando, insofferenti verso entrambe le visioni consolatorie, aggrappandoci a qualche dato di realtà (per esempio che siamo in 30milioni ad avere un'identità digitale, o che oggi compiti produttivi e riproduttivi si distribuiscono più equi perfino qui), argomentiamo che fare di più e meglio è possibile, oltre che doveroso.

Quando si parla di crisi che hanno attraversato e attraversano l'Italia, si parla di salari bassi; crescita lenta; debito pubblico alto; bassa occupazione di donne e giovani, che nonostante la ripresa del 2021 (dati ISTAT 2021), è insoddisfacente quanto a tipologia dei contratti. Si parla anche di mismatch, disallineamento, tra competenze richieste dal mercato del lavoro e possedute da lavoratori e lavoratrici. Gli indicatori socio-economici, nonostante i segnali di ripresa ci siano stati, confermano i divari tra generazioni, generi e territori. Le Italie sono almeno due, nord e sud, in realtà molte di più, se si tiene conto delle differenze e somiglianze che attraversano il paese, per esempio tra aree deindustrializzate e depopolate del nord come del sud, tra centri e periferie, aree urbane e aree rurali.

I piani di ripresa e rafforzamento europei e nazionali— dal NextGenerationEU contro la pandemia, al recentissimo RepowerEU contro le conseguenze economiche e sociali della guerra russo-ucraina, mirano a colmare questi divari guardando alle prossime generazioni. Cercano di tenere insieme emergenza e futuro. Ma 'holding two thoughts', come si dice, non è mai semplice. Lo è ancora meno quando su un piatto della bilancia pesano le emergenze a noi vicine nello spazio e nel tempo e sull'altro, più distanti, obiettivi di transizione ecologica e sostenibilità energetica. Come ci insegnano non solo la teoria politica ed economica ma l'esperienza quotidiana, i pericoli vicini sono percepiti come più gravi, quelli che appaiono, non sempre a ragione, distanti, sono ridimensionati quanto a gravità e rilevanza. L'emergenza energetica odierna, per fare un esempio vicino, è emblematica. L'oggetto è identico, "la dipendenza europea dal gas russo e il potere che questo dà alla Russia sull'Europa", però le misure a breve, bruciare carbone ora per compensare le mancate forniture di gas, o stringere accordi rapidi con altri esportatori di combustibili fossili, stridono con gli obiettivi del Green Deal su cui siamo già in ritardo.

La scelta è, per citare liberamente le parole del Primo Ministro Mario Draghi all'inizio del conflitto, tra "accendere il condizionatore" e occuparsi di sostenibilità geopolitica, oltre che economica, alimentare e ecologica.

Contraddizioni tra azioni e dichiarazioni di principio sono sotto gli occhi di ciascuno. Siamo chiamati ad essere attori e spettatori contemporaneamente e le scorciatoie ideologiche, come in tutti i momenti gravi, andrebbero accantonate per 'sporcarsi le mani' con la Politica.



## PRODUTTIVITA', LAVORO, FORMAZIONE.

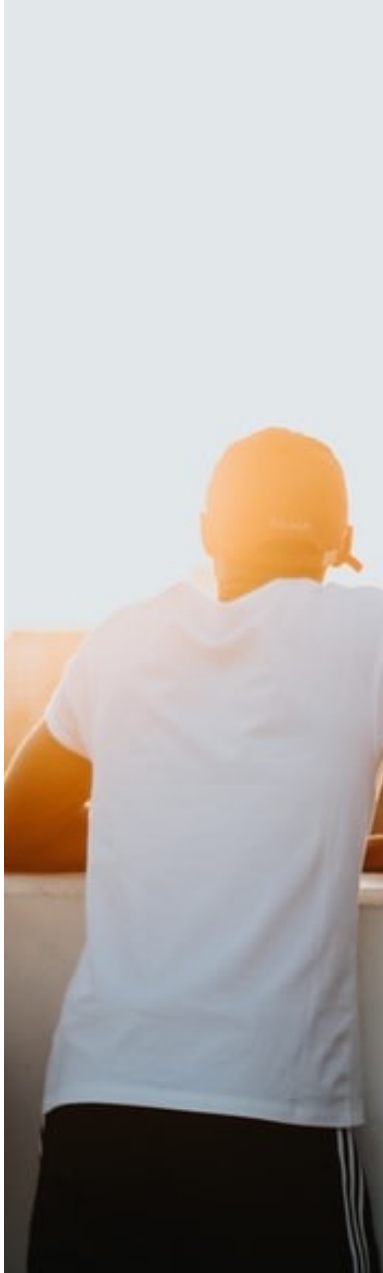
Non sfuggono alle contraddizioni nemmeno le politiche per l'occupazione e la formazione professionale—uno dei pilastri della strategia europea per la competitività e dei programmi per la ripresa e la resilienza post-covid. All'obiettivo, il Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza italiano dedica circa 4 miliardi.

Dati e analisi sul pregresso degli investimenti in formazione professionale e continua ci raccontano una forza lavoro con poche occasioni di formazione; un Sud con i disoccupati di più lunga durata in Europa, che ammontano ad oltre il 10% della forza lavoro contro l'1.3% della intera Germania. La percentuale italiana di Neet, giovani 20-34enni "not in education, nor in employment, nor in training", è oltre 10 punti sopra la media europea (27,8% di Neet per l'Italia contro il 16,4% dell'EU). In una frase si parla di bassa produttività dell'Italia. La produttività è figlia di contesti e non caratteristica intrinseca di lavoratori e lavoratrici. La produttività del lavoro è un indicatore di efficienza, spiega quanto efficientemente un lavoratore o un'impresa generano prodotti o servizi in un certo periodo di tempo e con determinate risorse. La produttività dipende dalle performance dei dipendenti, cui contribuiscono skill, inclinazioni, valori, motivazioni, talenti e dalle occasioni di formazione, dalle tecnologie, dall'organizzazione dell'impresa, come ci ricorda [Lidia Baratta su Linkiesta](#) del 6 giugno 2022. Quella italiana non cresce e le cose stanno così già da un po'. Nel 2018, 2 anni prima della pandemia, la produttività italiana calava dello 0,3% a fronte di un aumento delle ore lavorate. Che cos'è che non funziona?

Di questo si sta occupando il PNRR, il grande piano di riforma e di spesa pensato in occasione della crisi pandemica ma mirato ad affrontare questioni strutturali che il paese si porta dietro da anni. Tra gli obiettivi del Piano figurano innovazione della pubblica amministrazione e del settore industriale, aumento della produttività e inclusione sociale, rispettivamente missione 1 e missione 5 del PNRR. Entrambi questi obiettivi si avvalgono dell'utilizzo di tecnologie digitali come leve per il cambiamento. Per entrambi gli obiettivi il cambiamento passa attraverso una riforma della PA che ne migliori efficienza, organizzazione e coordinamento, in modo anche da meglio dirigere le operazioni PNRR. Una riforma che impatta direttamente su politiche attive del lavoro, dispositivi dalla inclusione sociale, su tutele e diritti dei cittadini, che da lavoro e salari passano necessariamente. Perché sin qui una società senza lavoro non si è ancora data.

All'evento annuale organizzato a Roma da FORUM PA, di cui si sono tenute più di 30 edizioni, Tangorra, presidente dell'ANPAL (agenzia nazionale con un ruolo di indirizzo, coordinamento e monitoraggio dell'attuazione delle politiche per la formazione e il lavoro) ha presentato GOL (Garanzia Occupabilità Lavoratori). Una delle iniziative per la ripresa economica dopo la pandemia, GOL verrà attuato di concerto tra Stato e Regioni. L'obiettivo è quello di raggiungere un minimo di 3 milioni di beneficiari entro il 2025, di questi almeno il 75% devono essere donne, disoccupati di lunga durata, persone con disabilità, giovani under 30, lavoratori over 55. Almeno 800mila persone tra questi 3milioni devono partecipare ad iniziative di formazione entro il 2025 e per 300mila deve essere formazione sulle competenze digitali (perché l'Italia è indietro per digital skill, 20esima su 27 paesi).

Dei 4 miliardi del PNRR dedicati a politiche attive e formazione, 135 milioni sono destinati a creare centri di facilitazione digitale per accrescere competenze e inclusione. Di questi, 135 milioni di euro sono dedicati a creare 3mila centri di facilitazione digitale che dovranno accrescere competenze e inclusione digitale. Il 21 giugno scorso la Confederazione delle Regioni ha approvato il piano del Dipartimento per la trasformazione digitale per l'attuazione della misura sulle reti di facilitazione digitale. I 135 milioni verranno ripartiti tra le Regioni, cui spetta la responsabilità per l'attuazione delle politiche del lavoro, attraverso accordi singoli.



La percentuale italiana di Neet, giovani 20-34enni "not in education, nor in employment, nor in training", oltre 10 punti sopra la media europea (27,8% di Neet per l'Italia contro il 16,4% dell'EU).

## CONCLUSIONI

In questi giorni si stanno svolgendo fitte consultazioni e accese discussioni su salario minimo e reddito di cittadinanza. Quest'ultimo è chiamato in causa nelle discussioni sul mancato incontro tra domanda e offerta di lavoro. Da una parte si schiera chi sostiene che le concessioni welfaristiche ledano la produttività e il dinamismo del mercato perché trasformano potenziali lavoratori e lavoratrici in precettori di sussidi con meno incentivi ad attivarsi sul mercato del lavoro. Dall'altra, usando lo stesso presupposto del dinamismo del mercato, il fronte opposto sottolinea come, in un mercato sano, la competizione per conquistarsi la forza lavoro necessaria dovrebbe avvenire al rialzo: se le imprese offrissero più soldi e migliori contratti, lavoratori e lavoratrici arriverebbero.

Se non esistono ricette sicure per curare lavoro e produttività, una formazione coerente con i bisogni di domanda e offerta, che guardi al futuro, alla sostenibilità economica, ambientale e

sociale, e non solo..., è a come usare i fondi sul breve periodo, e' una via piuttosto sicura su cui inoltrarsi. Una iniezione massiccia di competenze chiave, quelle digitali ma anche di project management e specializzazione tecnica di alto livello, unita ad una riforma della relazione tra scuola e lavoro e ad una offerta di percorsi professionati di alto livello, che vengano percepiti come utili e significativi per scegliersi la vita, per aumentare e non restringere le opzioni a disposizione di ciascuno, in Italia o all'estero, metterebbe il paese su una buona strada.

Cambiare il contesto per aumentare soddisfazione di lavoratori e lavoratrici, performance e produttività, dunque. E' questo l'obiettivo di alcune delle call del PNRR mirate al workforce development; dei fondi locali per favorire l'incontro tra domanda e offerta di lavoro. Un obiettivo che dovrebbe diventare la sfida condivisa per ripensare il mercato e il senso del lavoro oggi, affinché ciascuno possa riappropriarsi di questa dimensione esistenziale fondamentale, secondo i gradi e i modi più congeniali.



*Gli obiettivi del PNRR includono l'innovazione nella pubblica amministrazione e nell'industria, l'aumento della produttività e l'inclusione sociale, rispettivamente la missione 1 e la missione 5 del PNRR.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As one of the Grants Development Consultants for Italy at Grants Office Europe, Adele Lebano has gained a rich experience through her former positions in academia, business, and the public sector across a variety of European countries and United States. Evident throughout her writing and her consulting are her passion for rigorous research, effective communication, freedom, equality and inclusion.

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- 2 writing samples (preferably narratives from successfully funded projects)





# WorkForce Development

In The Netherlands



## The Labour Force

1 in 5 people aged 25 to 65 has been actively engaged in some form of education in 2020.



## Hours in Training per Week

A high percentage (44%) of adults in training invests less than 7 hours per week in training.



Adults in training that spend between 7 and 13 hours is at 23%, while 33% of adults in training spend more than 13 hours in training.

## DECREASE

Age is associated with a decrease in workforce development participation.

## Participation in workforce development by age group



# Het Arbeidspotentieel & De Toekomst Van Werk

Gregory Clare

“They took our jobs!” Riep een verbolgen Darryl Weathers tijdens een buurtvergadering in South Park. Bewoners van de fictieve stad zijn ontstemd door het banentekort die zij wijten aan de toestroom van het tijdreizende proletariaat uit het jaar 3045. Een gedenkwaardig citaat en sindsdien veelvuldig gebruikt om xenofobische gedachtegoed en publieke debatten over migratie te ridiculiseren. Waarom ook niet! Je hebt niets te vrezen als je jong bent, hoogopgeleid, een relatief goed betaalde en dynamische baan hebt.

Maar hoe inzetbaar blijf je in de op handen zijnde digitale economie en de daarbij behorende automatisering van arbeid? De wereld verandert zozegd zodanig dat zelfs hoogopgeleide werknemers zoals piloten hun beroep in een andere vorm zullen zien overgaan of zullen zien verdwijnen.

En terwijl een SiRi-achtige stem me opdraagt mijn stoel rechtop te zetten en me voor te bereiden op de landing, denk ik aan scenarios waarbij ik eenzelfde lot als van dhr. Weathers kan afwenden. Maar wat als ik dat niet doe? Wat als we dat allemaal niet doen, en we de toekomst van werk behandelen alsof het nooit zal gebeuren? Laat de Europese Commissie maar iets anders bedenken dan [tegen 2030 elk jaar 60% van de volwassen bevolking in de Unie aan een opleiding te laten deelnemen](#). Een flinke opgave voor mensen die dachten dat hun tertiaire opleiding de laatste horde was. Maar ook een flinke opgave voor de overheid en het bedrijfsleven, [die voornemens zijn om jaarlijks 2 miljard uit te geven aan de ontwikkeling van arbeidskrachten](#). Hieronder een greep uit de Europese subsidieprogramma's waarvoor aanzienlijke middelen zijn uitgetrokken voor de ontwikkeling van de beroepsbevolking.

Programmas	Skills Investeringsen
European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)	€ 61.500.000.000
Erasmus	€ 16.200.000.000
InvestEU	€ 4.900.000.000
European Globalisation Adjustment Fund	€ 1.100.000.000
European Solidarity Corps	€ 800.000.000
Digital Europe	€ 500.000.000

De omvang van deze financieringspoel duidt er wel op dat arbeiders nog steeds [een belangrijk onderdeel vormen van wat regeringen en het bedrijfsleven beschouwen als de toekomst van arbeid](#). Echter alle focus op Human Capital ten spijt, noch ik, noch mijn collega's zien dat projecten die voortvloeien uit dergelijke fondsen een op mensen gerichte aanpak hebben. Werknemers zijn niet meer dan een middel om het doel te bereiken. Werknemers ontwikkeling ten bate van de productiviteit en weinig oprechte interesse in hoe de werknemer zijn werk en leven wil invullen.

Ik zou dit probleem kunnen wijten aan de manier waarop subsidies geformuleerd worden, echter schrijf ik dit artikel voor een ander doelgroep. Ik zie hier vooral kansen voor projectontwikkelaars die zich willen onderscheiden van andere subsidieaanvragers. Door de focus te leggen op wat de beroepsbevolking te winnen heeft bij uw inspanningen en niet wat het kan verliezen als het niet voldoet aan een nog steeds niet erg goed gedefinieerde industrie 4.0, kunt u een sterk onderscheidend project leveren aan subsidieverstrekkers zelf ook in ongewis zitten.



*iets anders bedenken dan tegen 2030 elk jaar 60% van de volwassen bevolking in de Unie aan een opleiding te laten deelnemen*

## OVERDRAAGBARE VAARDIGHEDEN

Werknemers ontwikkeling, herscholing en de subgroep “upskilling” zijn allen gebaseerd op de veronderstelling dat mensen een intrinsieke behoefte hebben om zichzelf te ontwikkelen en carrière te maken. En voor zij die dat niet doen hebben we tafelvoetbaltafels, futuristische slaapcoupés en sushi. Maar hoe leiden we de beroepsbevolking op als slechts een deel van hen intrinsiek gemotiveerd is?

Wellicht dienen we verder te kijken dan werknemers enkel vaardigheden bij te brengen ten behoeve van de arbeidsproductiviteit. Als mensen hebben we een groot aantal identiteiten, waarvan sommige op de achtergrond raken wanneer we in onze kantoorruimte aankomen. Maar als we de vaardigheden kunnen inzetten die mensen in hun vrije tijd verwerven of willen verwerven, hun eigenlijke passie en niet hun bron van inkomsten, kunnen we bijscholingsprojecten opzetten die mensen de vaardigheden aanreiken waarvan ze in alle facetten van hun leven kunnen profiteren.

Met het tot stand brengen van dergelijke synergiën kan het enthousiasme van mensen voor een leven lang leren worden

aangewakkerd. Soft skills zoals organisatorische vaardigheden kunnen zowel de professionele als de hobbymuzikant van pas komen. Hetzelfde geldt voor digitale vaardigheden, aangezien de meeste kunstvormen en het leven in het algemeen steeds meer gebruik maken van digitale hulpmiddelen. Het feit dat [90% van de bevolking van de EU actief is op het internet](#), terwijl [40% van de bevolking niet over digitale basisvaardigheden beschikt](#), moet ons ertoe aanzetten opnieuw na te denken over hoe intuïtief de huidige instrumenten zijn en over de manier waarop we mensen opleiden om ze te gebruiken.



*hoe leiden we de beroepsbevolking op als slechts een deel van hen intrinsiek gemotiveerd is?*



## DE KRACHT VAN LEVENSLANG LEREN BENUTTEN

Tom Vanderbilt schreef in zijn boek “Beginners: The Joy and Transformative Power of Lifelong Learning” dat hij voortdurend nieuwe feitjes leerde, maar zelden nieuwe vaardigheden. Dit geldt voor velen die weinig aandacht besteden aan procedurele kennis terwijl ze meer dan bereid zijn om declaratieve kennis op te slaan. Nieuwe dingen leren is een inspanning, waarmee rekening moet worden gehouden bij het ontwerpen van cursussen, programma’s en activiteiten.

Wanneer u uw volgende EU-voorstel schrijft, zult u in uw probleemstelling het hoge percentage digitale ongeletterdheid in de EU willen benadrukken. Maar als u zich wilt onderscheiden, zorg er dan voor dat u een antwoord heeft op de vraag wie er baat bij zal hebben en hoe zij er baat bij zullen hebben. En hoezeer inzetbaarheid ook klinkt als een overtuigende doelstelling, voor velen betekent het alleen maar dat ze hun brood niet verliezen. En niet verliezen is niet echt winnen.

Misschien berusten mijn argumenten te veel op anekdotische verwijzingen, en minder op feiten en wetenschappelijk bewijs en is dit artikel meer een opiniestuk dan de gebruikelijke “grants best practice” die we publiceren. Maar nu veel transformaties en innovaties stilstaan in hun ontwikkeling door een gebrek aan geschoolde arbeidskrachten is dit nummer over “workforce development” een uitgelezen mogelijkheid om de mankementen van human capital projecten te belichten.

De veronderstellingen die in het beleid en de daaropvolgende financiering en projecten worden gemaakt, lijken op de veronderstelling dat iedereen het wel eens was met de globalisering. Een leven lang leren geniet veel wetenschappelijk bewezen voordelen, zoals het uitstellen van cognitieve achteruitgang en geheugenverlies. Er zitten ook voordelen aan een actieve levensstijl en gezonde voeding, toch heeft niet iedereen de behoefte hierin mee te gaan. En we hebben geleerd dat het verschillende benaderingen behoeft om resultaten te boeken. We kunnen lering trekken uit de fouten bij de aanpak van ongezonde levensstijl en ze als leidraad gebruiken voor onze aanpak van levenslang leren.



*Een leven lang leren geniet veel wetenschappelijk bewezen voordelen, zoals het uitstellen van cognitieve achteruitgang en geheugenverlies.*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gregory is one of the senior Grants Development Consultants at Grants Office. His area of expertise is the funding landscape in the Netherlands and the EU, with a particular focus on digitalisation processes in education and the developing labour market. As a former grant writer and fundraiser in the Lebanese, Syrian and Turkish context, he is also adept to developing compelling projects for non-profit organisations seeking European funding. His spare time is filled with as much sports as possible and he claims to be an expert on European film.

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# Workplace culture as an innovation tool for better business results

**Vanessa Del Pozo Sánchez**

Our ancestors exercised different kinds of labour depending on their physical and creative skills in order to transform elements of the environment for their benefit. As a result, the evolution of work has adapted thanks to the creation of more and more functional tools: Industrial Revolutions and Wars have been major drivers of change, resulting in the improvement of productivity, transportation and the increase of income per capita, as well as changes in population, economy, environment and the incorporation of women into the labour market. However, the evolution of work has also brought negative effects such as pollution, urbanisation, exploitation of labour, greater social inequality and the stratification of new social classes, labour problems, and unemployment, among others.

In the last decade, the use of technological solutions has increased, especially in health, education and the private sector. However, 2020 and 2021 were challenging and unprecedented years. The arrival of COVID-19 made social distancing a rule and a way to survive, while the use of digital tools and technological solutions accelerated simply as a means of keeping up with the demands of work.

However, as we have seen, the intensive use of these tools has led to many unintended secondary effects, including unemployment. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates that 14% of jobs will be replaced completely and 32% will be interrupted by the use of new technologies, generating a global crisis. There are, however, several ways to avoid these alarming losses, including, as one example, an ethic of responsible use regarding artificial intelligence, clear limitations and on the use of artificial intelligence, delimiting the roles that each entity plays in this new society, and adapting workforce development to the current situation.



*The arrival of COVID-19 made social distancing a rule and a way to survive, while the use of digital tools and technological solutions accelerated simply as a means of keeping up with the demands of work.*

## WHAT IS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT?

When we talk about workforce development, we now usually think of the digital empowerment of staff to face new challenges caused by the redefinition of work brought about by digital technologies. However, there are other tools and points of interest that make up workforce development, beyond the digital training of the workforce.

The following focus points constitute workforce development tools to be used to avoid the alarming losses mentioned above: (1) labour-related incentives, (2) the generation of new responsible intelligent systems, and (3) the creation of healthy workplace culture.

Labour-related incentives are those programmes that not only focus on upskilling or reskilling people but are also programmes that focus on recruitment support, wage subsidies, and on-the-job training, which have as their main objective the reduction of operational costs incurred by new businesses.

The generation of new responsible intelligent systems, focusing on research and the development of knowledge, will entail assigning responsibilities to intelligent devices by incorporating reasoning (deontic) capabilities into their decision-making so that they can operate in moral and legal regulatory environments on a day-to-day basis.

Finally, the creation of a healthy workplace culture is not just about creating better internet connections and online meeting tools, it is about building a hybrid workspace that enhances the capabilities of individual workers and that anticipates the amount of work a company requires so as to plan and act accordingly.

To create a healthy work environment, we have to recognise that workplace culture is highly connected to both innovation and the company's annual results; a healthy workplace will enable new combinations of collaboration (interdisciplinary and intergenerational), teamwork, creativity, the redesign of workforce options, the rewarding of workers' effort, strategy and acquisition of alternative sources of talent, all with the aim of boosting mental health in times of change.

## GRANTS LANDSCAPE FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In Europe, there are numerous grants that are available to cover the first two strands workforce development. The first strand—labour-related incentives—is supported by many calls for proposals aimed at private companies, as well as the health and education sector, from the Horizon Europe, Digital Europe Program, Lifelong Learning Programme and Erasmus + programmes, which target the qualification and re-qualification of the workforce, and the training of unemployed people.

The second strand—for the generation of new, responsive intelligent systems—is supported by a programme created through the Horizon Europe's budget of 16 billion euros (2021-2027) for research into new and emerging technologies. It is the first Pan-European programme, and so far, more than 12,000 projects and over 10,000 researchers have been selected for funding, and more than 850 research institutions have benefited.

However, regarding the third strand, there is little direct support for the provision of coworking spaces, whether physical or virtual, for annual subscriptions to cross-disciplinary digital tools that improve operational efficiency such as Asana, Miro, Webex or Visme; there is equally little direct support for bonus payments, employee appraisals to learn about new strategies for alternative talent sourcing or for psychological assistance, all of which promote and ensure the mental health of workers.



*The arrival of COVID-19 made social distancing a rule and a way to survive, while the use of digital tools and technological solutions accelerated simply as a means of keeping up with the demands of work.*



## WHY IS THERE A LACK OF SUPPORT FOR THE THIRD STRAND?

First, it should be made clear that the fact there are not many subsidies to create a healthy workplace does not mean it is not as important as the other two strands. The truth is we have neglected the importance of mental health for success in the workplace.

It was not until we found ourselves in a national or global catharsis, such as the Great Recession (2008-9) and the pandemic, that we saw an increase in mental health problems worldwide. In 2022, the WHO reported that, worldwide, depression, exhaustion, concentration problems, memory loss and anxiety increased by up to 25 percent in the first year of the pandemic. Some of this was generated by the uncertainty that the pandemic generated, but a large impact was seen due to the “new normal” of work and education, which became digital and disrupted social interactions, as living and working occurred in the same space.

In the same way, just as the “new normal” came about suddenly, it did not allow time for adaptation, leading to the widespread unskilled uptake of technological tools. The sudden shift meant there could be little provision for education regarding the best use of such digital tools, and thus the opportunity for closer and more interactive relationships with the rest of the team, which digital uptake may otherwise have facilitated, was missed.

The “new normal” also forced companies to respond in an emergent way, as some were forced to provide financial support for their workers to set up a workspace at home; in some cases, grant programmes were designed to enable this, such as that administered by the Dankse Bank in Luthuania in April 2021.

However, these grants did not derive from government, and this solution only functions as a temporary stop-gap to one of the problems. Europe needs to take the lead in subsidies for hybrid spaces and tools to help us improve our interactions with new technologies and with each other.

To solve this, we must demand such support from our governments, as our evolution has shown us that we are complex beings and that health and wellbeing have a strong impact on creating better business results.

Before COVID-19, hybrid spaces were already considered a tool for work; however, the pandemic worked as an accelerator, bringing with them less traffic on the streets, which has meant less stress in big cities, as well as relationships with people located in other countries and/or cities without the need to take a plane. It will allow for more freedom in decision-making and greater organisation and task allocation if digital tools are put to good use; thus, available time can be better used to generate closer

face-to-face relationships. It will allow healthy social distancing, without the generation of cases of depression or social anxiety, either as a result of being socially overexposed or underexposed. It will allow responsible use of Artificial Intelligence, without the need to create a dependency on it. And all of this will result in a better quality of life for everyone, which will, in turn, have great results for companies.

By supporting all three strands, we will be able to use technological tools as a complement to the society we live in, reducing the daily working hours, but without reducing the employment rate, while bringing the same economic and social benefits as before.



*Europe needs to take the lead in subsidies for hybrid spaces and tools to help us improve our interactions with new technologies and with each other.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vanessa Del Pozo Sánchez is a grants consultant for Grants Office Europe. Driven by reason, analysis, and the disposition to help others, she takes pride in coming up with plausible solutions for a broad range of problems, all as part of a system of human cooperation. As part of the team of Grants Office, her goals include support to public and private entities in their search for grants for high-tech projects in Spain”

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## EU Programme Snapshot

# Funding Mid to long term energy storage and energy storage systems integration



## SUMMARY

Financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Kansen voor West III is an economic stimulation programme for the West Netherlands. The programme is born from a consortium of four provinces (North and South Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland) and the four largest cities (Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht). It has a budget of € 237 million, largely funded by the ERDF with € 200 million and state co-financing of € 37 million, which will be dispersed in the period from 2022 to 2029.

These regional investments are made within six specific objectives:

1. Innovation
2. Energy efficiency
3. Renewable energy
4. Energy systems
5. Circular economy
6. Sustainable urban development

## ELIGIBILITY

In general, eligible applications are expected from SME applicants. However, some grants under this programme require, or encourage, the involvement of knowledge & research institutes, healthcare entities and local government.

## DEADLINE

As of the 1st of June 2022, projects can apply for the various grants available through the Kansen voor West II programme, until the funds are depleted.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Beschikbare budgetten \(kansenvoorwest.nl\)](https://kansenvoorwest.nl)

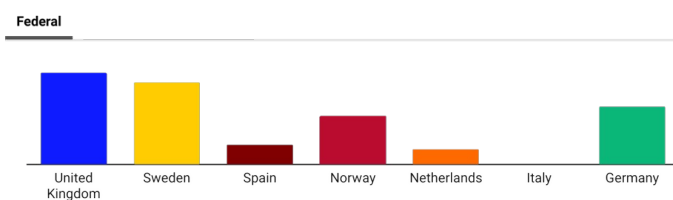
# Preliminary Analysis on Workforce Development

Charlotte Von der Brelie

Workforce Development Funding has increased in importance to governments and companies in the past years. It is a method to help us counter the current skills shortage we are experiencing, such as the shortage in IT specialists. Secondly, it is a practical and efficient way for governments to allow industries to train people in the skills needed in the industry.

Following our grants intelligence on funding for workforce development we decided to analyse the data and present you with the results. First, we used two differing data sets, one indicating the total amount of grant available, by each funder type in a particular country. And second, where we evaluated the total aggregate program value for each country, by funder type. Funder types usually are Federal, State and Local Government, we have not included private Grantmakers and non-direct EU funding in this analysis for purposes of simplicity. However, it is important to note that this might impact the coherence in total funding available in a country that is portrayed in this analysis.

## Workforce Development Funding



One interesting topic we've discovered is that the source of workforce development funding highly differs from country to country. We expected countries with a centralized government to issue more funding on the federal and local level and countries that are more federalized to be the opposite and predominantly distribute funding through the state level. Political systems do have an effect on funding type to some extent, but it is not consistent in our observation. The UK, Italy and the Netherlands are leading when it comes to local levels of funding with Italy being an outlier.



*We expected countries with a centralized government to issue more funding on the federal and local level and countries that are more federalized to be the opposite and predominantly distribute funding through the state level."*

Germany and Spain have larger state funding numbers, both of which are federalised republics with a strong emphasis on state self-management. Further, our analysis uncovered that the Netherlands, Italy and Norway have very little state funding whilst state funding is very limited in Sweden and the UK. On the federal funding level, we see a large number of grants in the UK, Sweden, Norway and Germany. I recommend caution in drawing general conclusions on the basis of our data and background knowledge alone. This has been an exercise in what we have seen governments do up to this point, however, all subject countries have extensive recovery plans in place which are projected to address the very issue of workforce development. We will, therefore, continue to monitor developments and expect a thorough analysis when the ambitious plans are executed.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charlotte Von der Brelie is specialised in German funding opportunities, as well as European Structural funding and IPCEI Projects



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Date & Time: July 21 2022

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Date & Time: September 1 2022 at 14.00 CET

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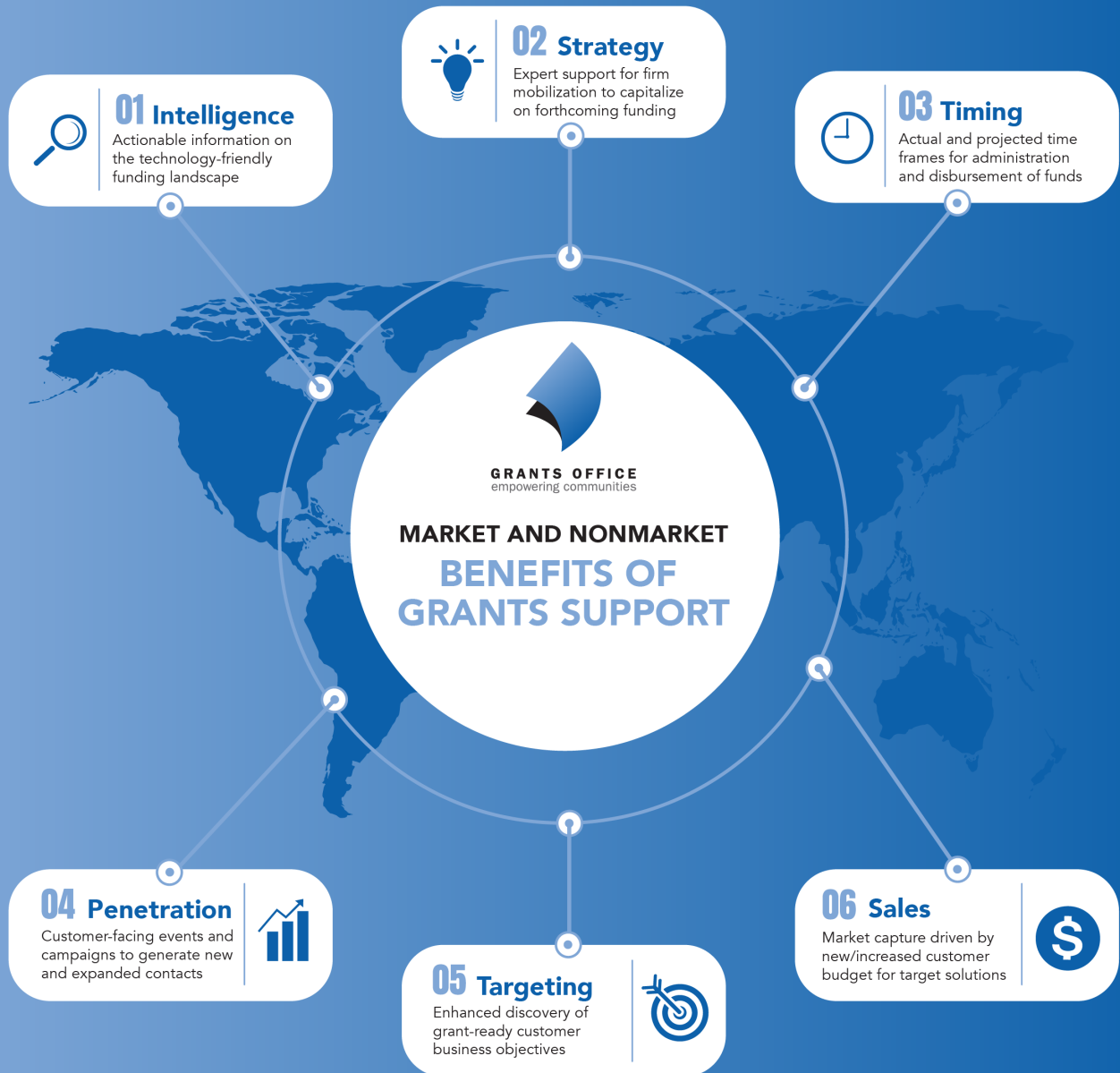
La place de la lutte contre la pauvreté dans le plan de relance et de résilience européen : une approche multisectorielle @ COLLOQUE PLURIDISCIPLINAIRE INTERNATIONAL

Date & Time: October 19 & 20 2022

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