

# Fewer than 10% of EU businesses offer comprehensive learning opportunities critical to employee performance and well-being, new survey says



The best outcomes in terms of company performance and workplace well-being are obtained in companies where training is valued highly according to the recently published European Company Survey 2019 by EU agencies Eurofound and Cedefop. The survey also reveals how businesses fare better when the responsibility for skills use and skills development is explicitly shared between the employer and their employees. According to the findings, almost all managers (96%) agree training is important for employees to do their current job and most workplaces in the EU offer at least some training, yet only a small number – 9% – offer comprehensive training and learning opportunities to most of their employees.

Overall, the ECS 2019 demonstrates that companies can design their workplace practices to help generate outcomes that benefit both workers and employers. Businesses can boost performance while improving aspects of workers' job quality by bundling practices that promote specific practices such as training and learning, increasing employee autonomy and facilitating employee voice. Around one fifth of EU workplaces have these beneficial bundles of practices in place. Successful examples can be found across all types of business regardless of country, size, sector, or competitiveness strategy.

Focusing on skills, the findings confirm how training is an important way to achieve positive workplace outcomes. Results also show that 71% of workers in EU-27 companies have skills matching their job requirements; 16% on average are overskilled, while 13% are underskilled. At the same time, over three quarters of companies report they have difficulties in finding candidates with the required skills (26% find it very difficult and 51% fairly difficult). In terms of sectors, construction has the most difficulty, with 86% of these businesses reporting difficulties in finding candidates with the desired skills.

Companies that are highly digitalised perform better and achieve better workplace well-being outcomes than others and the survey findings show a positive association between digitalisation and innovation and a company's approach to skills development. Companies that have a comprehensive training and learning opportunities in place are by far companies that are more likely to be highly digitalised as well as innovative. Conversely, those that do not innovate are likely only to offer limited training and learning at work.

Policymakers and social partners have a key role in supporting companies to improve their workplace practices. Employer associations and trade unions can, in particular, play a major role in the design and implementation of

policy measures geared towards improving skills use, employee autonomy and development and facilitating employee involvement in the workplace. To support managers in adapting workplace practices, the report also suggests that policymakers can involve business schools and HR management associations to target general and line managers' skills and knowledge base which is critical to the success of any workplace change initiative.

On Thursday 29 October 2020 at 10:00 CET, Eurofound together with [European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training \(Cedefop\)](#), are organising a live #AskTheExpert webinar session to delve into the European Company Survey 2019 findings specifically relating to skills.

Moderated by Maria Jepsen, Deputy Director of Eurofound, webinar participants will be able to join a lively and interactive debate with the ECS 2019 report authors Giovanni Russo and Gijs van Houten and guest panellists Isabel Coenen, policy advisor at the Dutch trade union FNV and Pär Lündstrom, expert in skills provision with Swedish employers – both members of Cedefop's Management Board.

Participants will be able to comment via a LIVE online chat.

**More information**