

# Shaping a digital, green and inclusive recovery – the urgent need for strong cooperation

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- **COVID-19 exposed existing structural weaknesses in health care systems, social safety nets and public administration efficiency.**
- accelerated digitalization - the lack of digital skills, access and digital infrastructure - inequality dynamics.
- sluggish productivity growth, lack of quality job creation and the transition costs of restructuring before the pandemic.
- challenges related to low growth, increased risk of unemployment and bankruptcies, scarring effects on youth, and the aggravation of physical and mental health of the vulnerable.
- **Large-scale investment and support foreseen** in recovery packages provide an **opportunity to boost growth but also enhance resilience, inclusiveness and address environmental sustainability challenges.**

## Our way out of this crisis

- Co-operation is the key to a transformative (green and digital) and inclusive recovery for communities, cities, regions and countries, firms and social partners alike
- lessons learned during the 2008 financial crisis - gathering and analysing data, facts and viewpoints, and by learning from each other, supporting
- From finding and distributing treatments and vaccines, to keeping trade flowing and our economies moving, and ensuring tax rules benefit all countries, the COVID-19 pandemic has made international co-operation among all countries and regions more important than ever.

# European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience

**By 2025:**

- **raising the upskilling and reskilling of adult people by 32 % (120 million adults/year);**
- **raising the number of low-qualified adults participating in learning activities by 67 % per year;**
- **raising the number of jobseekers with recent learning experience by 82%;**
- **raising the number of adults with basic digital skills by a quarter.**

# The loss in on-the-job learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Participation in informal learning due to widespread shutdowns of economic activities is estimated to have decreased by 25%. In the case of non-formal learning the estimate corresponds to 18%;
- Workers employed in administrative and support service activities; in the arts, entertainment and recreation, are expected to lose, on average, nearly three-quarters of informal and non formal learning opportunities per week;
- fewer learning opportunities for disadvantaged and low-skilled workers who, in turn, are most likely going to need retraining.

## Encourage a more participatory culture

- It is important for policy makers to consider how to build trust between stakeholders and a positive and the right attitude towards a digital, green and inclusive recovery development;
- Attention to 'mediating' actors who are leading, facilitating, or linking in the middle within the system; for example between education and training providers, social partners, NGOs and local authorities.

### Key question(s)

- Which stakeholders should be (more) actively involved in reviewing existing, or developing new, action?
- What competences are needed for actors to effectively and efficiently  
a) implement change and b) achieve feedback and evaluate results?

## Recommendations of the EESC Opinion: *Towards an EU strategy for enhancing green skills and competences for all*

- The EESC emphasises that **environmental responsibility is an obligation of everyone**. Sustainable environmental development requires a drastic social change, including individual and collective changes to **our mentality, behaviour, lifestyles**, as well as in the social, political and economic organisation of our countries and societies.
- The EESC believes that green skills, environmental responsibility and sustainable development should be **integrated transversally within the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) of the formal, informal and non-formal learning** of all age learners in every educational sector, in apprenticeships, and in employee training schemes within and beyond the green sectors.

- The EESC calls for a **comprehensive EU level strategy**, such as a Council recommendation, on improving education and training on green skills and competences, **developing green school strategies**, and providing upskilling and reskilling to adults at and beyond the workplace in the skills needed for protecting the environment, for society and for greening the economy.
- We suggest that such a **Council recommendation** could follow up the suggestions of the new **European Skills Agenda** to focus on how to develop green attitude of everyone, making environmental responsibility as a transversal competence within education and training within the European Education Area.



- The EESC reminds the EC and MS to better **connect environmental policies to employment and education policies**. This should also help to focus on the skills anticipation and skills development of the unemployed or of people in work whose training should cover environmental responsibility and have a specific focus on green skills.
- Thus it is essential to ensure that climate change in learning and teaching is aligned with **democratic school culture** and with a learning environment of "green culture" that is experiencing the **creation of green schools**, which by having adequate climate-aware and environment-preserving infrastructure, are run sustainably in partnership with all school stakeholders and **prepare pupils for combating climate change as active citizens and in their future jobs**.

## Related EESC opinions

- [EU Competence Framework for Green Skills](#)
- [Updated skills agenda](#)
- [Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee](#)
- [Promoting skills for a more just, cohesive, sustainable, digital and resilient society](#)
- [Sustainable funding for lifelong learning and development of skills](#)