

The Union of Skills

4th meeting of the Coordination
Group on Global Policy Dialogue,
18 February 2026





The Union of Skills is our strategy to help people stay ahead in a rapidly changing world and keep Europe competitive and fair.

We, in Europe, put people first because the success of every person in learning, at work and in life is essential for competitiveness and for a stable and resilient Union.

*Roxana Mînzatu,
Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills,
Quality Jobs and Preparedness*



The need for more and better skills

Skill shortages and gaps in Europe

Europe does not produce enough skilled workers in both quality and quantity.

Transformation speed gap

Education and training systems and providers struggle to keep pace with rapid technological transformations and the changing skills needed.

Fragmented governance and skills intelligence

Multitude of stakeholders with variety of perspectives and insufficient consolidation and coordination.

In a Union of Skills



**Everyone in Europe is
empowered to
develop skills**

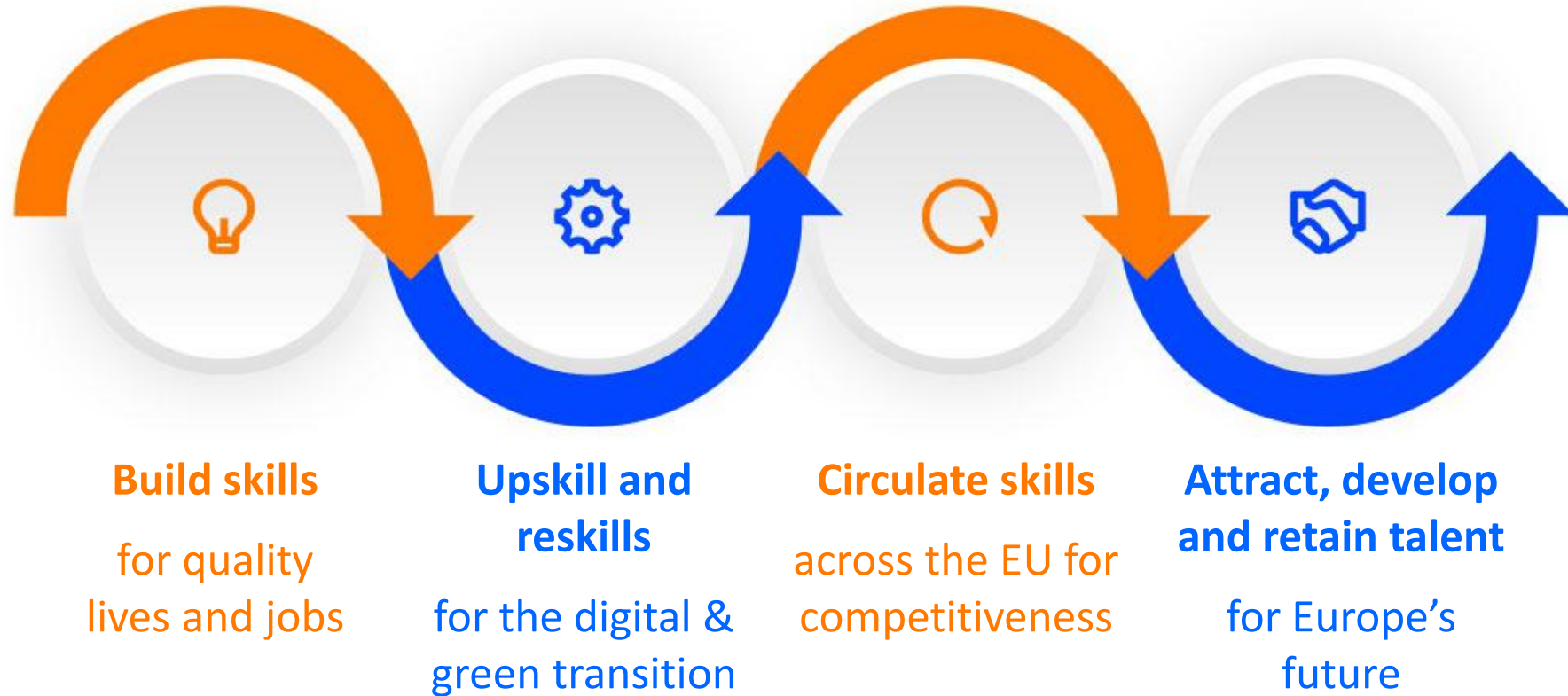


**Competitive
companies can find
people with the right
skills**



**Skills and
qualifications are
transparent, trusted
and recognised**

Union of Skills



INVESTMENT

Skills are an investment – not a cost

Significant and more effective funding for skills and education

Mobilising public and private investment



Governance

Towards a dedicated EU 27 Recommendation on human capital: education and skills in the European Semester

A European Skills Intelligence Observatory: providing the necessary data for well-informed policy

It will provide strategic data and foresight regarding skills needs in concrete sectors and regions, and the performance of education and training systems.

A European Skills High Level Board: driving the change

Bringing together key stakeholders to provide comprehensive, cross-sectoral insights and guidance on skills to EU policy makers.

In the first half of 2025, the Commission will publish an evaluation report on the European Education Area, which will inform a review by the Council with a view to streamlining and contributing to the Union of Skills governance.



Union of Skills - Initiatives focusing on higher education



- European competence framework for academic staff [2026]
- Increasing accessibility of higher education [2027]
- Expand the use of micro-credentials [ongoing]
- Common European framework for automatic recognition [2027]
- Joint European study programmes with a European degree/label [2026]
- A legal status for European Universities alliances [2027]
- Initiatives with the STEM Strategic Action Plan



Review of the ECTS Users' Guide

Update for 4th meeting of the Coordination Group on
Global Policy Dialogue, 18 February 2026



ECTS Users' Guide – revision 2027

- Last revision from **2015**, coinciding with a revision of the EHEA's Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG).
- 2024 Tirana Ministerial Conference tasked the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) to review the ECTS Users' Guide in order **“to strengthen its key features and adapt it to current developments, including micro credentials”**
- BFUG's assignment to the European Commission and the “Ad Hoc Advisory Group” on ECTS for the **Revision of the ECTS Users' guide**
- Almost done, **to be handed over to BFUG in March**

ECTS Users' Guide



ECTS Users' Guide – revision 2027



What has already been done:

- ❖ Initiation of a study on the current use of ECTS, on staff and students (with desk research, survey and focus groups)
- ❖ Meetings of the Ad Hoc Advisory group (3 physical and 3 online)
- ❖ Draft 1 after a first round of comments on structure and main changes
- ❖ Incorporation of elements from the study
- ❖ Draft 2 to BFUG board and Draft 3 to BFUG meeting in Copenhagen
- ❖ Integration of all comments
- ❖ Final presentation of the document in BFUG meeting in March in Nicosia

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Some key developments and issues

- Shorter, stand-alone courses leading to micro-credentials or similar
- Digitalisation of workflows for mobility and credentials
- Virtual exchange and blended mobility
- ECVET being repealed
- New forms of cooperation within European Universities alliances
- Monitoring of credit allocation not systematically everywhere
- Use of current grade conversion approach limited

Key changes

- Wording to strengthen position of ECTS as universal credit system for lifelong learning
- Wording to allow for credits to be allocated for all education provision
- Clarifying of awarding of credits, definitions and concepts (e.g: verifiable digital document)
- Clarifying of allocation of credits, definitions and concepts (e.g: for micro-credentials)
- Clear concepts of Transfer, Recognition, Automatic recognition, aligned with other working groups (such as ESG)



Thank you for your attention

Any questions?

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