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# WORK STREAM 4: RE-SKILLING, UP-SKILLING AND MICRO-CREDENTIALS ROUNDTABLE 3 | MINUTES

**DATE & TIME: November 10, 2021 | 10.00 - 11.00 AM CET**

**PRESENT:** *(alphabetically listed)*

Aiofe O'Shea, Zurich Insurance  
Alastair McMenamin, Zurich Insurance  
David Espinosa, UNI Europa  
Eirini Papadopoulou, Seldia  
Jelena Šapić, Reshaping Work  
Jovana Karanović, Reshaping Work

Lizeth Tijssen, Zurich Insurance  
Menno Bart, The Adecco Group  
Marine Marty, The Adecco Group  
Natalija Counet, Amsterdam Economic Board  
Roos Wouters, De Werkvereniging  
Wouter Zwysen, ETUI

**ABSENT:**

Alok Alström, AppJobs  
Bertan Baytekin, AppJobs  
Dimitris Theodorakis, UNI Europa  
Ignacio Doreste, ETUC  
Kalle Palling, Cachet

Laure Alexandre, Seldia  
Olivia Blanchard, Digital Future Society  
Sebastian Köhler, Delivery Hero  
Thanos Moysiadis, Uber  
Wiggert de Haan, Roamlar

**AGENDA:**

▶ **Project Updates:**

- November edition of tailor-made [monthly policy briefing](#) sent on November 8, 2021
- Expert Lecture by Konstantinos Pouliakas, Education and Training Expert at CEDEFOP, is available in the Member Library along with lectures of the work stream on access to social protection (Jeremias Adams-Prassl) and algorithmic transparency (Ivana Bartoletti). The videos are for internal purpose only. A publicly posted blog based on his lecture that can be shared on social media is available [here](#).
- Reshaping Work's Onward [event on data portability](#) will take place on November 25. Register [here](#).
- If you would like to share your vision on the future of work and motivation to join the Multistakeholder Dialogue Project, get in touch with Jelena Sapic (jelena@reshapingwork.net) for more information. This would greatly help us with the next stage of the project.

## ➤ DISCUSSION TOPIC 1: COLLABORATION

Challenges and questions stemming from the labour market changes are too complex for any organisation to be able to solve it on their own. There is the rise of the so-called public-private initiatives in the last few years. These initiatives consist of triple helix organizations uniting their efforts to work on a certain challenge. The involvement of the broad spectrum of partners is often a pre-condition for getting any sort of external financing and having enough capacity to do things at the desired scale. The discussion evolved around mapping important partners for re-skilling and up-skilling and the role of the government in skill development.

- The Adecco Group shares that temporary agency industry collaborates quite a lot with **public employment services (PES)**. The scope of these collaborations differs - sometimes it is only exchange of information with both parties trying to help people find new employment, while on another occasions it is collaboration on events, such as job fairs. It also happens that PES outsources a part of its services to the temporary agency industry (in such cases, PES set key performance indicators that agencies need to meet; the agencies are paid based on a number of people placed into jobs). In many countries, PES is **decentralized**, so this type of collaboration has a local character. These collaborations work better in the Netherlands, the Flanders in Belgium, and France, points Adecco, where there is high trust in PES and public institutions. In another countries there is a mistrust towards commercial companies, thus such collaborations are less likely to take place.
- UNI Europa is more engaged at the European level with other social partners and employers' federations when it comes to discussions on skills. This type of framework is **policy oriented**. Their affiliates address the issue of skills on the ground and feed the European institutions with insights. Details of skill development need to be discussed in the context of social dialogue where the workers' voice (especially from the industries rapidly changing and from platform economy) is represented, point union representatives. Such a dialogue could be facilitated by the European Commission.
- Amsterdam Economic Board observes plenty of local and regional organizations addressing the issue of up-skilling and re-skilling of workforce, and from their perspective, the European Commission's role is only financial.
- De Werkvereniging intends to inform their members about the possibilities of up-skilling and re-skilling in order to stay competitive in the modern world of work. They have just begun and would like to achieve **collaboration with education institutions in meeting needs of independent workers**.
- Seldia's member companies show that the collaboration **works differently on national and local levels**:
  - In France, its trade association works with the government on the issue of diplomas.
  - In Poland, the trade association organizes training programs that are financed by a company or through the association.
  - Many of Seldia's members find it hard to obtain funds provided by local authorities, or are not aware of these opportunities. In this sense, more transparency is needed.
- There are **shortages of certain professions/skills in the labour market** across countries and there are two approaches to this problem: a) government coordination in re-skilling and up-skilling processes; b) sectoral approach as a driving force in re-skilling and up-skilling.
- The government in Finland started an internal collaboration framework between four different

ministries to discuss up-skilling and re-skilling as these are not anymore a matter of one single department but permeate multiple lines of competence.

## ▶ **DISCUSSION TOPIC 2: FINANCING**

In 2020, the European Investment Fund (EIF) and European Commission have launched a new pilot guarantee facility to improve access to finance for individuals and organisations looking to invest in skills and education. The EUR 50 million pilot scheme supports financing for students and learners, enterprises investing in the upskilling of their employees, and organisations supplying education and training. The Skills and Education Guarantee Pilot (S&E Pilot) is a new debt financing initiative dedicated to stimulating investments in education, training and skills – as part of the solution to get more people into jobs and to respond to the European economy’s changing needs. Recently established Recovery and Resilience Facility will allocate funds to the EU member states that will be used, among other things, for re-skilling and up-skilling. There are also efforts of national and regional governments to dedicate financial means in the form of subsidies, schooling vouchers, loans and special arrangements for reskilling and upskilling of the population. The discussions addressed types of financing stakeholders need to carry out re-skilling and up-skilling programs and whether there are obstacles in applying for/benefiting from existing financing opportunities.

- ▶ From the perspective of diverse forms of work, the question is how to incentivize employers to train workers engaged only for short-term assignments, points the Adecco Group. One way around it is **individual learning accounts** (ILAs), where the role of the European Commission could be to encourage the Member States to develop their own systems of ILAs. Another is related to establishing **sectoral training funds**, as Business Europe is advocating, for instance. Both solutions imply that training responsibility should rest with individuals, even though financing could be sourced from multiple sides (e.g., private and public sector).
  - De Werkvereniging is also in favour of connecting social security as well as personal learning budget to social security number. By doing so, income protection would be guaranteed (e.g., individuals have skills that are prerequisite to finding new job opportunities). De Werkvereniging points that traditional actors on labour markets and traditional way of addressing re-skilling and up-skilling represent an obstacle to emerging and innovative solutions.
- ▶ Zurich Insurance noticed a **data skills shortage** and their hope is that the current gap can be overcome with the EU funds in the next three to five years. However, this also points to the need to create awareness of these training programs so that invested funds are used in the most efficient manner.
- ▶ Amsterdam Economic Board points to **discrepancy** between investments into programs that people do not find attractive enough to attend.
  - It created a platform called Thomas to provide an overview of initiatives and programs aimed at talent development on a regional level.
- ▶ Companies in the selling industry pay from their own resources for training programs, because it is in their interest to equip sales force with adequate skills in reaching out to clients and providing personalized advice. However, while these companies would be interested in public financing, it is unclear whether such opportunities exist. Especially smaller companies may be less aware of such opportunities, if they existed thus awareness creation is crucial. Therefore,

- ▶ one of the next steps could be **raising awareness** about existing schemes. It can be a role for both, European and national institutions. The second step is to **simplify application procedures**, because companies, even when they know about the funds, find requirements and access too complex.

## ▶ **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- It is important that the European Commission goes beyond mere financing but provides the right framework for re-skilling and up-skilling.
- When it comes to diverse forms of work, it is important to have a third-party supporting individuals along their non-linear careers. [Research](#) has shown that workers who have received some form of career guidance or coaching were three times more likely to engage in training and were also more likely to make full use of the training opportunities compared to those who have not.
- The European Commission could advise national governments to encourage the private sector to allocate certain percentage of working time to training activities. A vehicle for these could be tax incentive, for instance.
- Emerging skills, such as digital, entrepreneurial, and soft skills, should be taught to individuals from an early age through the formal education system.
- Short courses in data literacy, digital skills etc. in general should be made more accessible to the entire EU workforce to ensure resilience and future proof labor force. Workers' motivations in this regard should also be considered and stimulated if needed.
- Re-skilling takes place on the job, so attention should also be paid to informal learning, as well as on ways to record the learning outcomes.
- Workers should be equipped with career hacking as a skillset. Career hacking reveals that careers are not determined and linear paths anymore, and it empowers workers to start exploring different roles and acquiring new skills.
- Ongoing transitions - green and digital - need to be carried out to benefit all the workers. Therefore, re-skilling and up-skilling programs should also be targeted towards marginalized groups such as immigrants or stay-at-home mothers.
- Responsibilities for re-skilling and up-skilling should also include employer organizations and not just workers.

## **NEXT STEPS & ROUNDTABLE:**

- ▶ The minutes are open to commenting by November 19.
- ▶ The first report commenting round is scheduled for December 15-22, 2021; the second report commenting round: January 3-7, 2022; whereas the report will be published in the last week of January 2022.
- ▶ The next monthly policy briefing will be sent in the week December 13-17.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

- ▶ Minutes submitted by: Jelena Šapić
- ▶ Minutes approved on: TBA