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Five Questions Shaping the Future of Skills

Inside the process towards the Torino Global Skills Summit 2026

What should skills systems deliver in a changing world?

In April we announced the Torino Global Skills Summit 2026 taking place at the OGR in Turin from the 23-25 November 2026 and invited you to save the date. Since then, we've been
building the programme, shaping the conversations and bringing together the people who will help define them. This newsletter is where we bring you inside that process.

Between now and November we'll be landing in your inbox every few weeks, each edition going deeper into one dimension of what the Summit is trying to do and why it matters.

We begin with the question underneath everything else:

"How can skills systems help Europe and its partner countries remain competitive, resilient and inclusive in a more uncertain world?"

This is the starting point of the Torino Global Skills Summit. Every track, every session, every conversation will help provide the answers to this crucial question.

The world has changed. Have skills systems?

The short answer is: not fast enough. And this is not a European problem alone. These pressures are reshaping labour markets and education systems across every region the ETF works with. Naming them and grappling with what they demand in practice are two different things. Here is what skills systems are up against:



Artificial intelligence vs institutional speed

AI is impacting jobs, occupational profiles and skills demands across sectors. The opportunity is real, but so is the risk of systems that train people for roles that no longer exist by the time they qualify.

The alignment paradox: Shortages coexisting with unemployment

Employers cannot find the people they need while too many people cannot find work matching their potential. Alignment requires systematic change rather than short-term fixes.



The shift towards lifelong learning

Ageing populations and workforce transitions are increasing the importance of lifelong learning, reskilling and upskilling.

Investment realities

Skills increasingly determine whether investment generates productivity and lasting local value, or simply passes through without taking root, a metric now central to development finance assessments



Systematic resilience in changing contexts

Skills systems continue to support adaptation, workforce participation and institutional development in rapidly changing environments.



Five questions the Torino Global Skills Summit can address

The Torino Global Skills Summit will tackle the issue of how skills systems help Europe and its partner countries remain competitive, resilient and inclusive, but here are five further questions speakers and participants in the Summit will try to resolve.

Question One

Can investment pay off in the long run?

Governments and partners invest heavily in economic transformation, industrial development, and strategic sectors. Yet investment alone does not guarantee results. Skills shortages continue to affect productivity and innovation. The Summit explores how skills systems can better support investment, value chains, SMEs, and economic growth.

Question Two

How can people continue learning throughout their lives?

As labour markets shift, expanding adult learning, strengthening up- and re-skilling, and improving career guidance become urgent challenges to ensure learning remains accessible and relevant across every stage of life.

Question Three

How can institutions keep up with technological change?

Advanced technologies create opportunities for productivity but also demand institutional readiness. Education and training systems must partner up with labour market actors and other stakeholders to respond to new forms of demand.

Question Four

How can skills support resilience, recovery and adaptation?

By investing in skills over the long term and ensuring that learning opportunities remain accessible to all. Skills systems can support workforce participation, help people adapt to economic and social change, and contribute to recovery and reconstruction by creating pathways into learning and employment.

Question Five

How do we connect people, business and society?

Too often discussions focus on only one perspective. Skills influence whether people access opportunities, businesses innovate, and societies hold together under pressure. The Summit will bring three connected perspectives into one conversation.



Skills for Business

Can skills systems keep pace with economic realities? Focuses on investment, innovation, SMEs, AI, and value chains



Skills for People

Are skill systems serving individuals? Focuses on adult learning, inclusion, youth employability, and mobility



Skills for Society

How do skills build democratic resilience? Focuses on social cohesion, participation, and long-term stability.

Three Perspectives. One Conversation.

The Summit is organised around three interconnected tracks, each offering a different perspective on the role of skills in a changing world. Together, they bring people, business and society into one conversation, exploring how skills can support competitiveness, inclusion and resilience.

1. **Skills for Business**
   Can skills systems keep pace with what economies actually need? The Business track focuses on competitiveness, investment readiness, innovation, SME support, AI and value
   chains. It will make the economic case for skills investment with evidence rather than aspiration, and explore what Global Skills for Local Development is and what looks like in practice for businesses and investors.

2. **Skills for People**
   How can education, training and employment policies deliver better outcomes for individuals? The People track focuses on adult learning, inclusion, youth employability, skills mobility and the recognition of qualifications. It explores how policies can support participation, learning and employment throughout life.

3. **Skills for Society**
   How can skills systems contribute to social cohesion, democratic participation and

resilience?
The Society track examines governance, active citizenship, recovery, reconstruction and just transitions, highlighting the wider role of skills in supporting resilient and inclusive societies.

Torino Global Skills Summit 2026
23–25 November 2026, Turin, Italy

Participation by invitation only. If you wish to receive an invite, write to TorinoSkillsSummit@etf.europa.eu
#TSS26

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