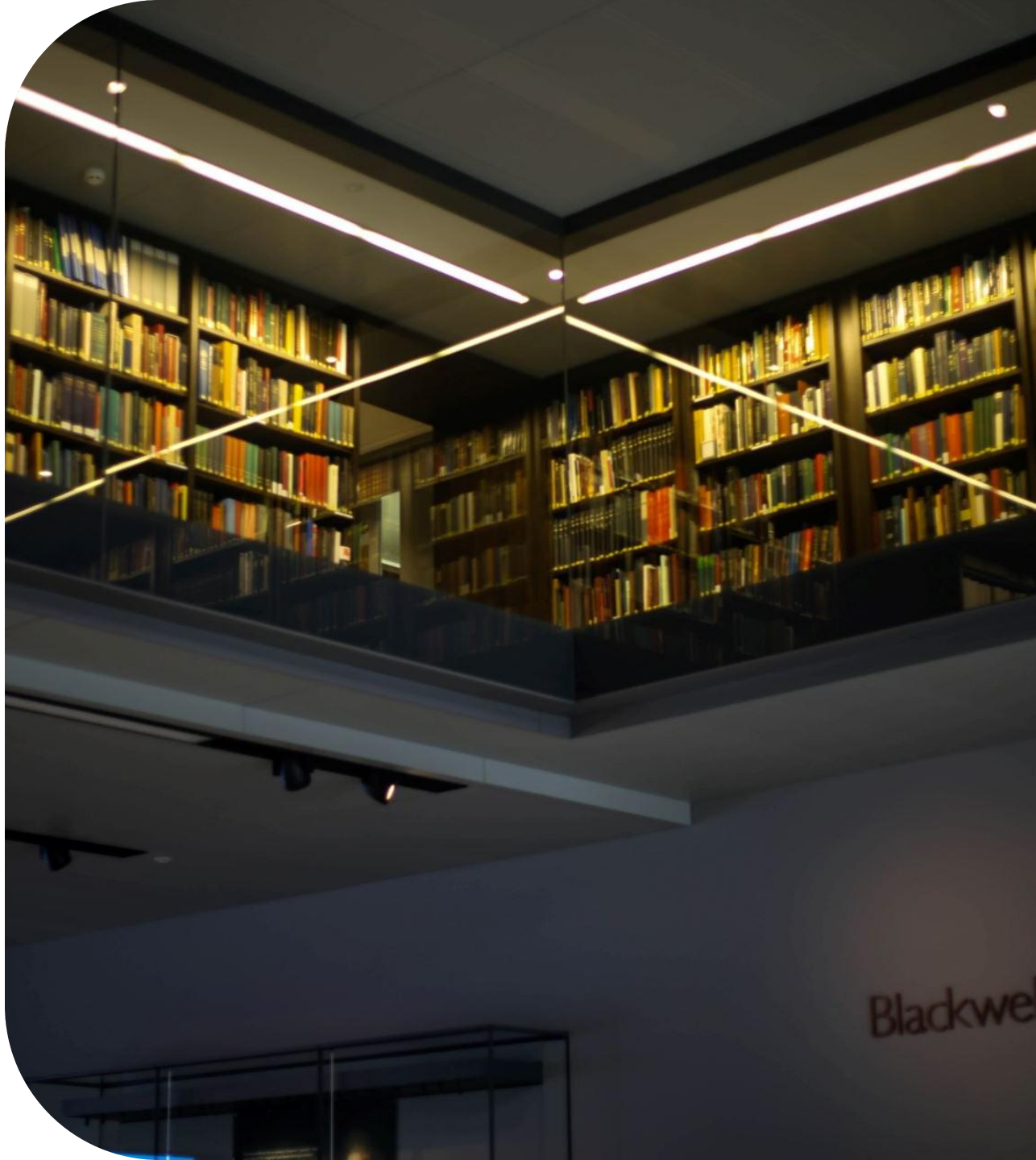
Science and Education for Society Working (SEFS) Group meeting

Skills for competitiveness: how to address skills shortages in Europe's regions?

23 March 2026| 14:30 – 16:00

ERRIN European Regions Research and Innovation Network



Practical info to feel at home at Wales House

- Emergency exit
- Toilets
- Coffee
- WIFI
- Participants list

Presentations will be shared after the event on the ERRIN webpage





Agenda

14:00	**Welcome and opening remarks** by Davies Berwyn, co-leaders of the SEFS Working Group
14:35	**Skills in Europe's regions: pitches of ERRIN members on skills challenges, issues and insights** • **Emila Romagna Region:** addressing structural shortage of highly specialised technical and digital profiles by **Federica Garbuglia** • **Rogaland County - Stavanger Region:** addressing technical and green skills shortages in advanced energy, industries and health, by **Runa Monstad**
15:00	• **Oslo Region- Campus Kongsvinger:** challenge of low education and lack of culture for learning by Anders Øverby • **Cities Northern Netherlands**: the MOVE (Modules for Vocational Education) Certificate by **Petra Wallenaar** (Municipality of Emmen), **Cigdem Zantingh-Akcelik** (Cross Border Institute Rijnland), **Wolfgang Arens-Fischer** (Hochschule Osnabrück)
15:15	**State of Play: EU policy updates: Supporting skills for competitiveness at the regional level** by **Steven Engels,** head of unit DG EMPL.B.5 Professional Qualifications and Skills for Competitiveness
15:30	**Discussion and Q&A** by **Delia Mitcan**, SEFS WG co-leader
15:50	**Final reflections and forthcoming series of online Skills talks at ERRIN** by **Joakim P. Berg** SEFS WG co-leader
16:0	**End of the meeting**



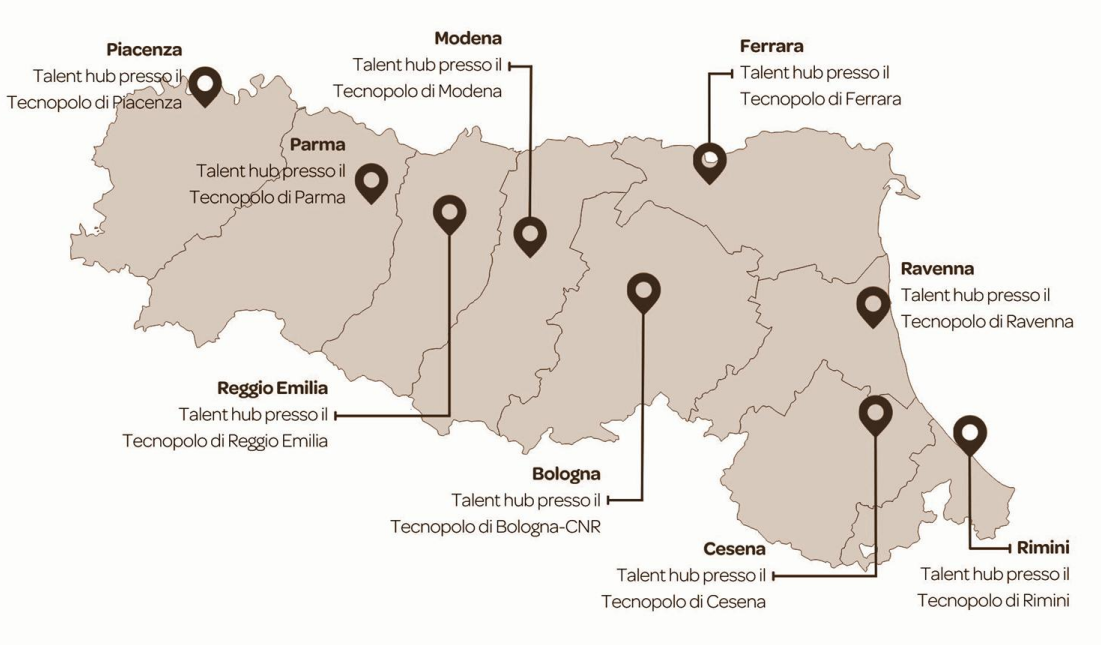
Emilia-Romagna for talent

ERRIN SEFS Working Group meeting - March 23rd 2026
Skills for Competitiveness: how to address skills shortages in Europe's regions?

Skills and Territories for Innovation Unit - ART-ER

ART-ER
ATTRATTIVITÀ
RICERCA
TERRITORIO

Emilia-Romagna's skills ecosystem



Surface area: ~22,444 km²
Population: ~4.4–4.5 million inhabitants
Total GDP: ~€149 billion
Key sectors: agrifood, manufacturing, biomedical and health, green economy, tourism, culture and creativity
Main skills challenge: structural **shortage of highly-specialised technical and digital profiles** in key strategic fields

How is the regional skills ecosystem supported?

- ART-ER Talent Hubs
- Regional law on talent attraction and retention
- Skills intelligence platform

Regione Emilia-Romagna

Talenti Emilia-Romagna
Avanzare insieme

The new regional law on Talents
Attraction, permanence and valorisation of talents in Emilia-Romagna' 21/02/2023, no. 2

First in Italy and in Europe, Emilia-Romagna has approved a law with the general objective of contributing to the attraction, permanence, return and the enhancement of highly specialised talent

Specific objectives

- To provide a **framework for the coordination of policies, programmes and interventions** favouring the attraction, permanence, return and circulation in Emilia-Romagna, of talents (understood as people with high specialisations);
- Supporting **an organic system of institutional collaborations** within and outside the regional territory on the issue of talent mobility, between European regions, local authorities, universities, research centres and other players of the regional innovation ecosystem;
- To offer and support an **organic system of public and private services** for the attractiveness of both talents (and their families) and local businesses and territories.



To increase:

- **Training and retention of talent**
- **Attractiveness of the territory**
- **Development of internationalisation/partnerships**

Target audience:

Highly specialised talent i.e. "*people who have gained knowledge and experience (or are involved in pathways) of particular relevance in the areas of training, research and innovation*"

www.regione.emilia-romagna.it/talenti

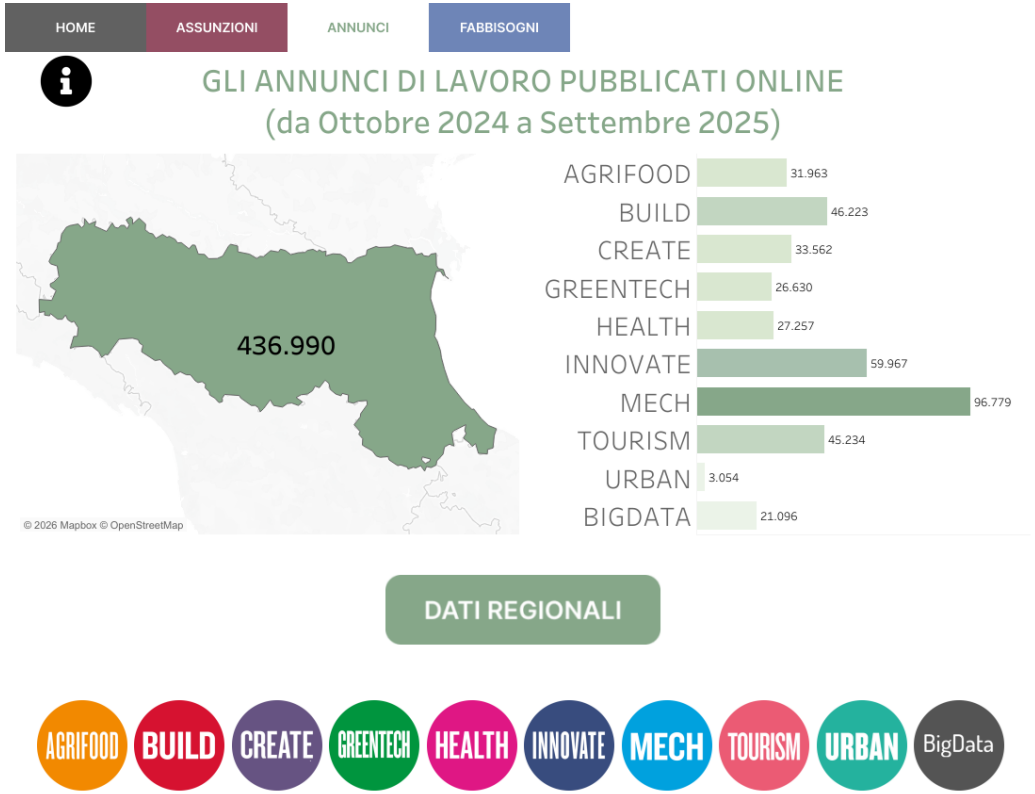
Emilia-Romagna. Il futuro lo facciamo insieme.

SKILLS INTELLIGENCE EMILIA-ROMAGNA

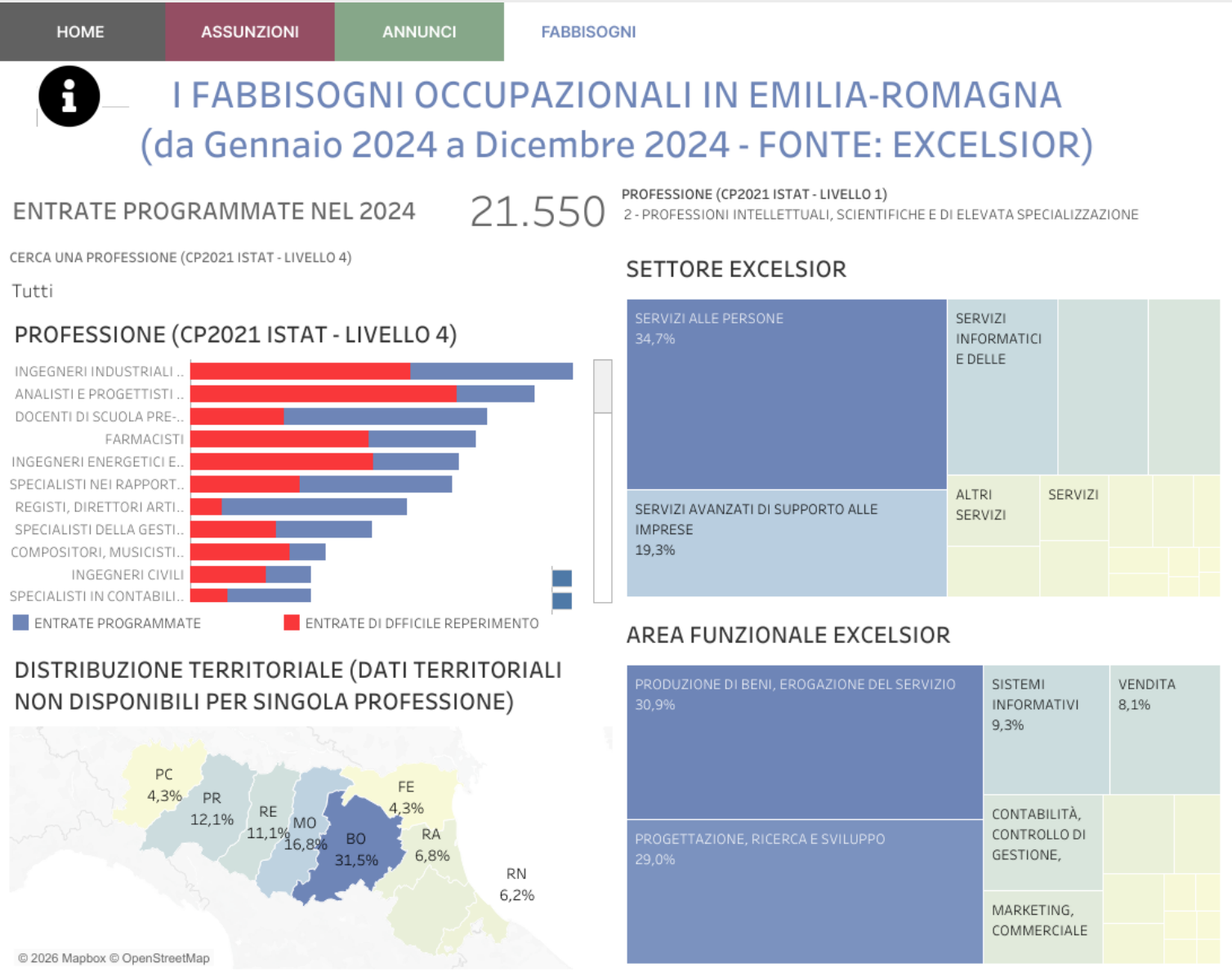
The aim of **Skills Intelligence Emilia-Romagna** is to support regional actors to **anticipate the skills demand** and understanding better what labour market is requiring, in order to help policymakers to design a more effective policy instrument, but also training and education organization to align their learning offers according to the labour market needs.

The project has delivered an **open source tool**, which shows data on skills and professional profiles sought by Emilia-Romagna companies **according to the different S3 Smart Specialization Areas** of Emilia-Romagna.

GO TO THE WEBSITE



Profiles and sectors with the Highest Demand for Advanced Skills



How can the Union of Skills help?

- Strengthen **alignment between skills policies and industrial and innovation strategies** at European level.
- Promote the **recognition and portability of skills** and qualifications across the EU.
- Work towards a common and coherent framework for **micro-credentials**.
- Ensure that **EU level solutions**, such as the future European Skills Intelligence Observatory, are designed to **complement and connect with regional data and foresight** mechanisms.

Contacts

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iter@art-er.it

Thank you!

ART-ER
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RegioneEmilia-Romagna

Rogaland fylkeskommune

STAVANGER REGION EUROPEAN OFFICE



Rogaland County – Stavanger region

Runa Monstad

Director Stavanger Region European Office

Rogaland

Population **500 000**



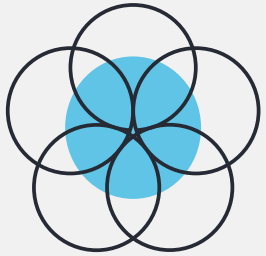
Municipalities **23**



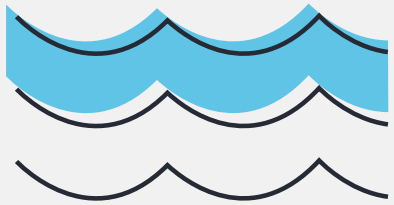
Area **9 377 km2**



Regions **5**



Coast **350km**



STAVANGER REGION
EUROPEAN OFFICE

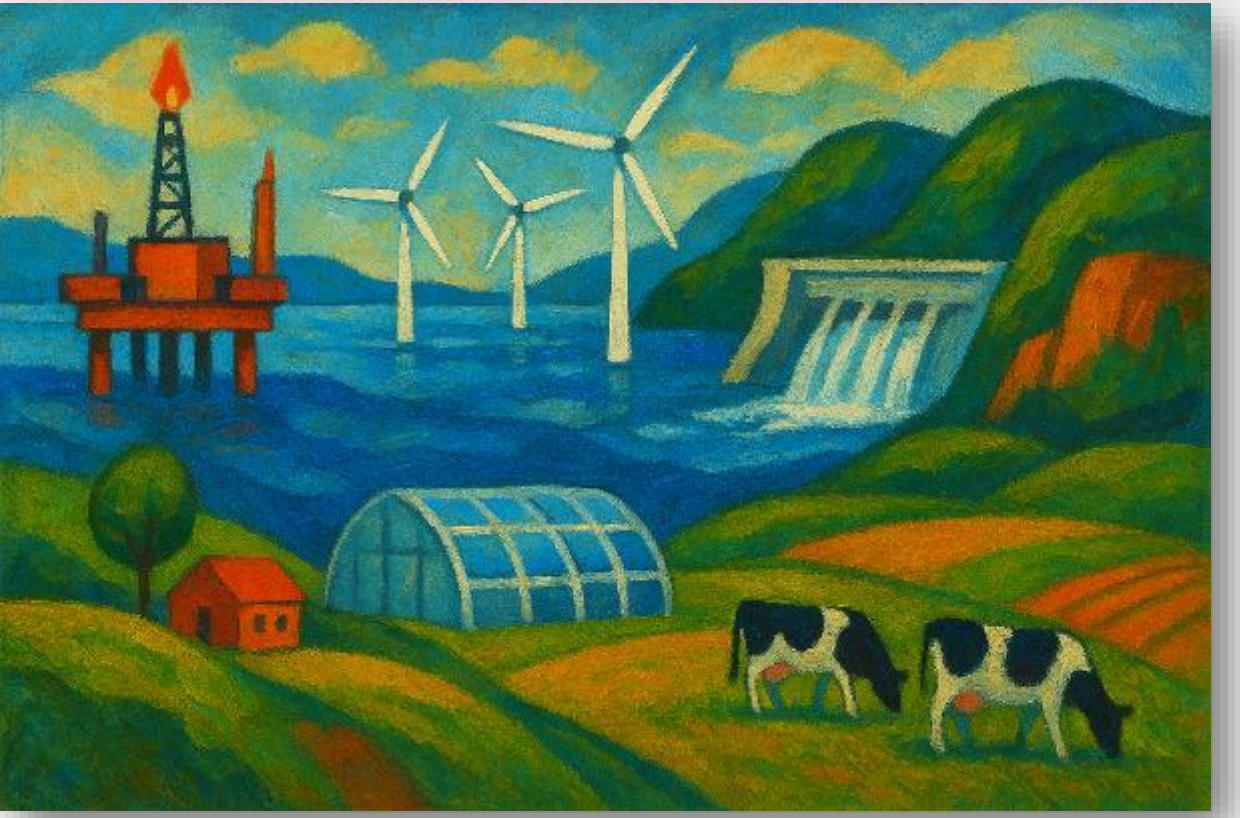


Rogaland
fylkeskommune


STAVANGER REGION
EUROPEAN OFFICE

Building on existing industrial strengths

STAVANGER REGION
EUROPEAN OFFICE



A history of utilising natural resource and adapting to change

Oil and gas still very strong: in 2023, the Stavanger region generated 20% of Norway's private sector revenue and 41% of its profit[1]

Excluding oil and gas [2]

Clean energy and maritime industries account for 23.5% of Rogaland's total value creation, supported by 12.8% of the workforce and 17.8% of estimated full-time equivalents, excluding oil and gas extraction.

Rogaland's **food sector**—including agriculture, aquaculture, greenhouses, and processing—contributes 5% of the region's value creation and 6% of its full-time equivalents.

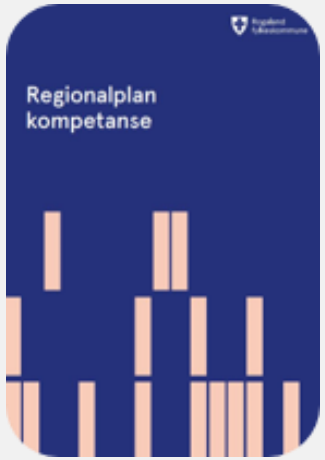
Tourism represents 3.1% of Rogaland's value creation and 7.2% of its full-time equivalents, with a high share of part-time and seasonal workers influencing productivity metrics.

[1] Stavanger Næringsforening & HHUiS, 2024
[2] EY, 2024 & 2025

Skills ecosystem

- **The main driving forces for skills development**: digitalization, demopgraphic changes, transition from oil & gas to green industries
- **Regional plan covers:** skills gap, innovation/reskilling, people outside work and education which is approx. 60 000 adults between the ages of 20-66 in Rogaland County
- **Most important skills challenges faced?**

No. 1. challenge: Not enough people!

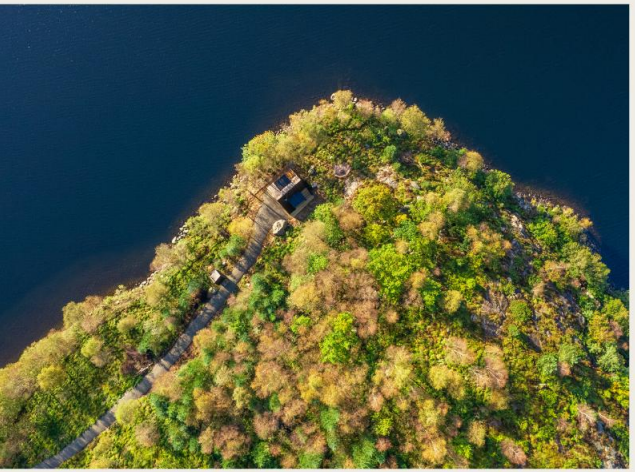


Measures already taken:

- The Rogaland Skills Forum (Kompetanseforum) is a high-level roundtable to shape and revise the county-level skills policy to meet Rogaland's future skills needs.
- The forum gathers Rogaland Polytechnic and Vocational College, the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, the University of Stavanger, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise.










STAVANGER REGION
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Union of Skills implementation

- How could Union of Skills help Rogaland overcome skills challenges?

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Unike og
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Campus Kongsvinger

Building a culture of learning in the rural Kongsvinger region

Vegard Herlyng & Anders Øverby

2026-03-23

Campus Kongsvinger

A rural cross-border region

Challenges

- Aging population (>25% >65yrs)
- 1/4 of 20s NEETs
- GDP border regions 86% of EU average
- Migration to urban areas
- Demographic parameters
- The need of skills



Campus Kongsvin

What is our solution?

- Not just talk…
- Proactive, flexible and true bottom-up approach
- Ecosystem approach
- Building a culture of learning – locally and across the border
- Regional skills intelligence – the national level is too far, and overwhelmingly caters to larger businesses



Why and how can Europe help regions like ours?

- Our approach reduces exclusion from the workforce, increases competitiveness and builds societal resilience for a strong and prepared Europe. How?
  - Take regional skills intelligence into account
  - Facilitate experimentation with place-based solutions
  - Embrace regional diversity: One size doesn't fit all
- More initiatives akin to the Erasmus+ KA3 policy projects, E+ Alliances for Innovation, Regional Innovation Valleys, and Interreg – as well as top-ups to local investment – could allow regions to explore solutions more freely

Campus Kongsvinger

A heart for knowledge

Støttet av Sparebankstiftelsen Hedmark, Odal Sparebank, Innlandet fylkeskommune, kommunene i Kongsvingerregionen og øvrig næringsliv.

Municipality of Emmen

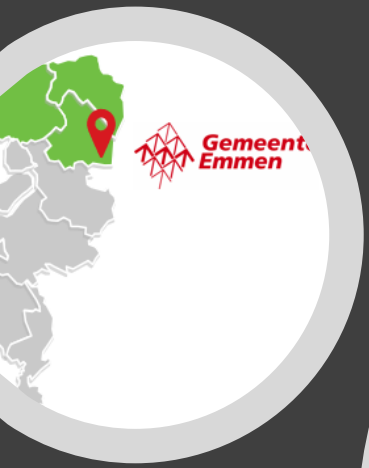
MOVE (Modules for Vocational Education)

An ecosystem approach to ensure skills provision for SME’s in technical industry and health care in a border region





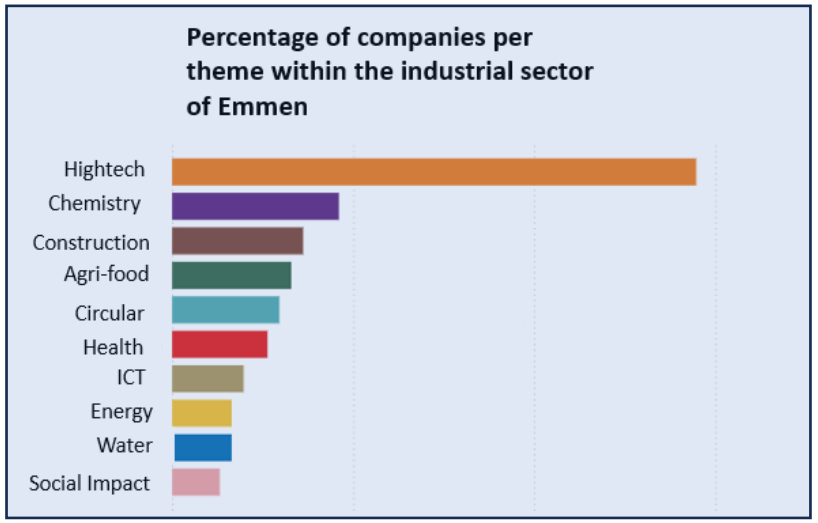


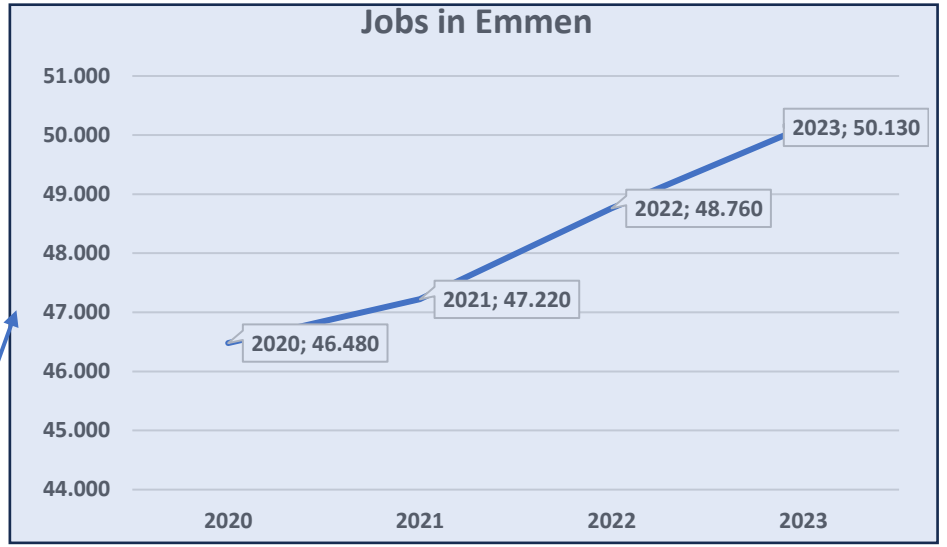


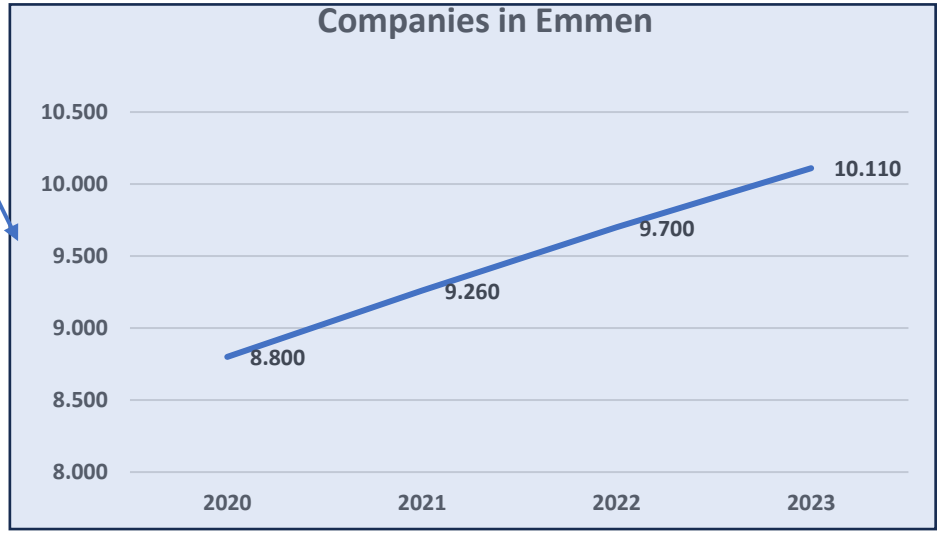




Emmen in a nutshell



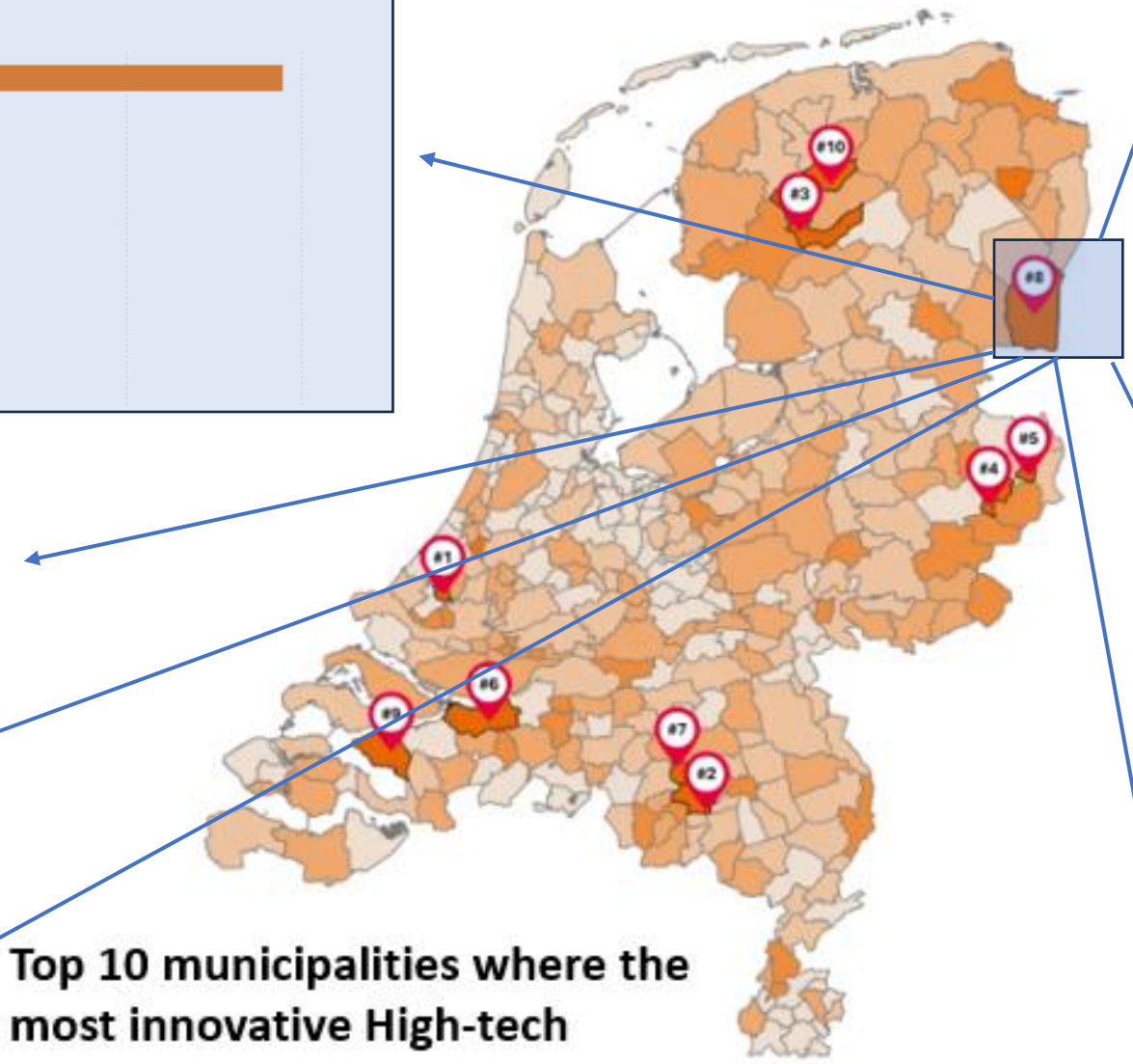




Residents Emmen
110.000

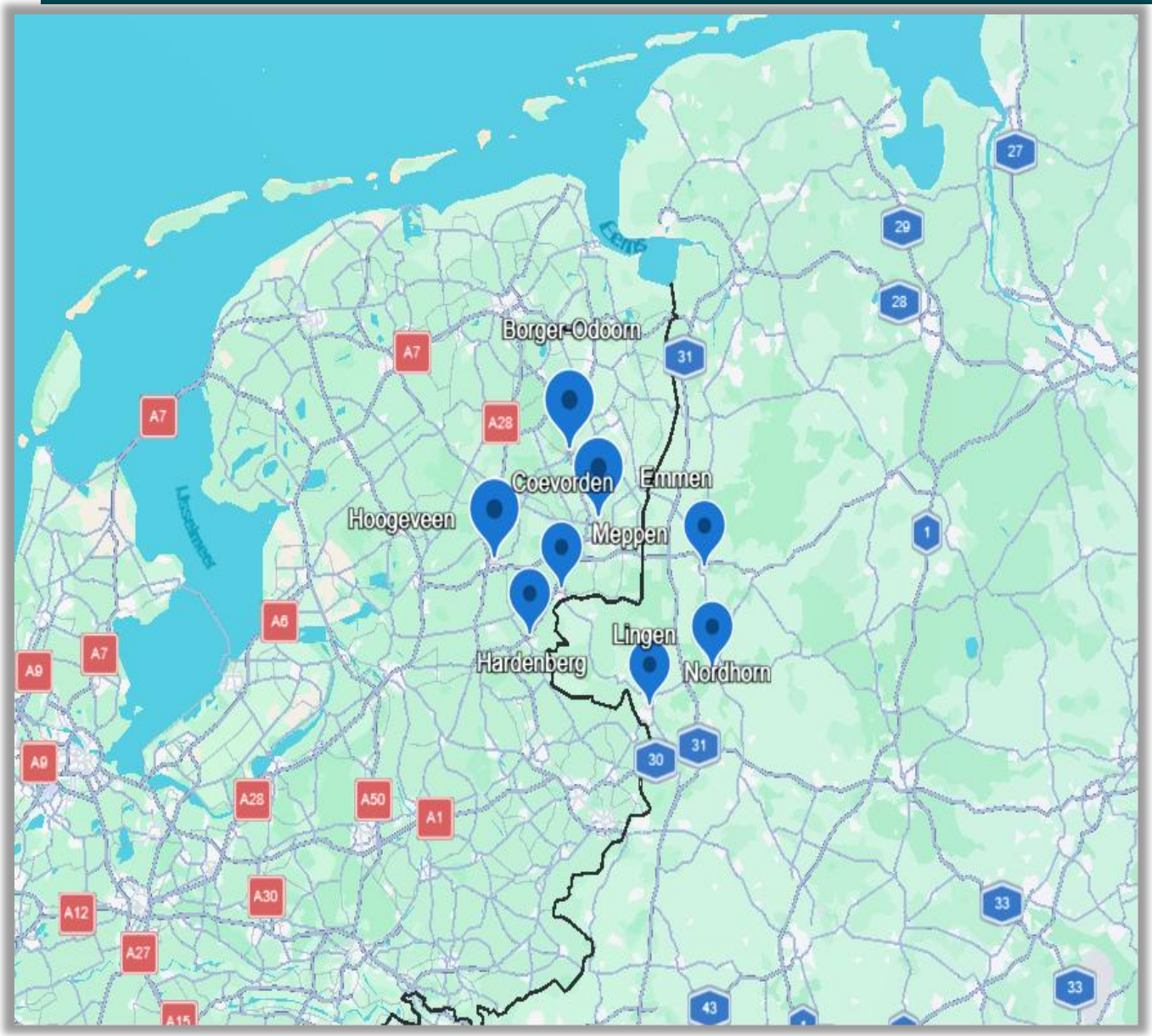
Industrial companies:
1.870

Innovative Companies:
293



Top 10 municipalities where the most innovative High-tech companies are located

Type of Education	Students
Vocational Education	3950
Higher Professional Education	2190
University Education	340
Total	6480



Emmen: 109.963 inhabitants

Regio South and East Drenthe and German Border Region: Ca. 500.000 inhabitants

Skills challenges

- Ageing workforce
- Shortage of workers in technical and care professions
- Mismatch in educational attainment
- Adaptability and up-to-date skills (Lifelong
- learning)
- BORDER:
- Working towards a 360 degrees labour market
- qualifications not recognised or lengthy recognition procedures
- unequal opportunities for vocational students (due to border barriers)

Exchange of skills in the border region

Rijnland Instituut (Emmen): a centre of expertise for cross-border cooperation

- Triple helix: government, business and education
- 10 years of experience in cross-border projects in education, innovation, sustainability and AI
- Project 360° job market: Development of necessary Euregional competences to enable students and employees to complete an internship, course or studies on the other side of the border
- Further development of the project 360° job market into MOVE certificate (Regio Deal Zuid- en Oost-Drenthe II, Co-finance: Province Overijssel)
- Companies are bound to our MOVE certificate project by including the business associations (Dutch and German side) within the region.

Netherlands
Education & Training
• Alfa College – Vocational skills training
• DC Terra – Green & technical VET
• NHL Stenden – Applied research & HE
Public & Regional Authorities
• Municipality of Emmen – (Lead Partner) – Project coordination & governance
• Municipality of Hardenberg – Local implementation
• Province of Overijssel – Strategy & funding
Innovation & Ecosystem
• IT Hub Hoogeveen – Digital innovation hub
• IQonIQ – Talent development platform

Germany
Vocational & Higher Education
• Berufliche Bildung Nordhorn – Regional VET
• KBS Nordhorn – Commercial VET
• BBS Lingen – Technical VET
• BBS Wechloy – Industry-linked VET
• Berufskolleg Gelsenkirchen – Urban VET
• Berufskolleg Paul Spiegel – Social VET
• Hochschule Osnabrück (Lingen) – Applied sciences
Public & Labor Market
• GBS Grafschaft Bentheim – Regional coordination
• BA Emsland – Employment services

Project: MOdule for Vocational Education

- A description of a format for a learning unit in two languages, in accordance with:
  - The scientific underpinning of the German competency model
  - Netherlands: elective qualification/subject (‘Keuzedeel’)
  - Germany: additional qualification 'Zusatzqualifikation’
- The procedure for registering the developed learning unit and the associated competence acquisition in Europass → **international access**
- Development of a digital reference document recognised by educational institutions and companies in the border region
- **Implementation of the Euregional Competences Development Lab of the Rijnland Institute (ErKo-Lab), which aims to equalise differences between curricula and teach students Euregional competences for living and working across the border.**

Program principles: creating an Union of Skills

- Remaining within existing **legal and regulatory frameworks**
- **National education standards and structures won't be changed**
- **Supplemental diploma** from elsewhere with missing competences (hard skills)
- Preparing students for work in a European environment and across borders (**Euregional competences**: soft skills and cultural differences)
- Proper **quality assurance** of learning outcomes
- **Learning outcomes** should be aligned with the **European Learning Model**
- Users can share their credentials with institutions and employers (**Europass**)
- Make use of **opportunities** in regular VET-programmes
- Program can be implemented in other European border regions

European Commission

#SocialRights
#PactforSkills

Skills for competitiveness



Why a Pact for Skills?



- **60 million** low-qualified adults
- **70%** of companies report that lack of skills hampers their investment

At Porto Social Summit in May, Member States endorsed targets by 2030:

- **at least 60% of adults participating in training every year**
- an employment rate of at least 78% in the European Union
- a reduction in the number of people at risk of social exclusion or poverty by at least 15 million people, including 5 million children

European Commission

Who?

Businesses (large and small), social partners, education and training providers, associations, cluster organisations, national, regional and local authorities, chambers of commerce and employment services etc.

Concrete commitments for Upskilling & reskilling of people of working age

European Commission

Skills partnerships in all strategic sectors (I)

Clean Transition and industrial decarbonisation	Health, biotech, agriculture and bioeconomy	Digital leadership	Resilience and security, defence industry and space
Automotive LSP	Agri-Food LSP	Micro-Electronics LSP	Aerospace and Defence LSP
Shipbuilding and Maritime Technology LSP	Health LSP	Digital LSP	Space Data, Services and Applications LSP
Construction LSP	European Health Industry LSP		
Digitalisation of the Energy System LSP	Long-Term Care LSP	*Madrid Oeste Tecnológico (MOT) RSP*	
Offshore Renewable Energy LSP		*Digital in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area RSP*	*RISE-ASD RSP*
Renewable Energy LSP	*ProMIS RSP*	*4gune RSP*	
Energy Intensive Industries LSP	*Agri-Food sector in Campania RSP*		
	Agri-Food Sector in Piemonte RSP		
Automotive Regions' Twin Transition RSP	*ZainLab RSP*		
European Chemical Regions Network (ECRN) RSP			
Maritime in the Beara Peninsula (B-MORE) RSP			

European Commission

Skills partnerships in all strategic sectors (II)

Consumer, social, and service-oriented industries
Retail LSP
Textile, clothing, leather and footwear (TCLF) LSP
Tourism LSP
Proximity & Social Economy LSP
Cultural and Creative Industries LSP
Textiles in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes RSP
Creative Industries in the Western Balkan region RSP
KSlgune RSP
Skåne region RSP

Cross-sectoral partnerships[1]
Lifelong Learning Mobility (EARLALL) RSP
Bari City & Metropolitan Area – Twin Transition RSP
Lombardy region RSP
EURADRIA region RSP
Twin Transition of the Thessaly region RSP

European Commission

Key Areas of Focus

Reinforcing Large-Scale Partnerships	Alignment with the Competitiveness Compass, Clean Industrial Deal, and future Preparedness Union Strategy
Improving Initiative Linkages	Addressing fragmentation and enhancing linkages among initiatives
Enhancing Cross-Sectoral Synergies	Facilitating knowledge and resource sharing along the value chain
Upskilling Commitments	Pledge to upskill 25 million workers by 2030, members to at least double their commitments



Pact for Skills – what lies ahead

1. Common services for the Pact for Skills and the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)
2. Alignment of the Pact for Skills Charter with the Competitiveness Compass
3. Expansion of the options for pledges: apprenticeships, reskilling, upskilling, and lifelong learning investments
4. Linking Pact Commitments to Financial Support
5. Linking the Pact's Large-Scale Skills Partnerships to the EU Skills Observatory
6. Engaging with Large-Scale Skills Partnerships

European Commission

Pact for Skills – The Architecture

20 Large-Scale Skills Partnerships

EU-wide, commitment-driven collaboration of major players in industrial ecosystems and sectors to upskill and reskill workforce

22 Regional Skills Partnerships

Collaboration to address local skills challenges within specific geographic areas

European Alliance of Apprenticeship

Multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen quality, offer and image of apprenticeships

Erasmus+ Blueprint Alliances for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills

Catalyst of EU public-private cooperation in strategic sectors to up & reskill workforce

Erasmus+ Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)

Innovating VET systems through networks of local and regional VET providers

VET Business Partnerships (NEW under ECF)

Deployment of modern VET on the ground linked to companies

EU Skills Academies

Rapid deployment of learning programmes to address urgent skills gaps in strategic sectors

European University Alliances

Long-term collaboration between universities, seamless mobility, joint degrees, high-quality credentials



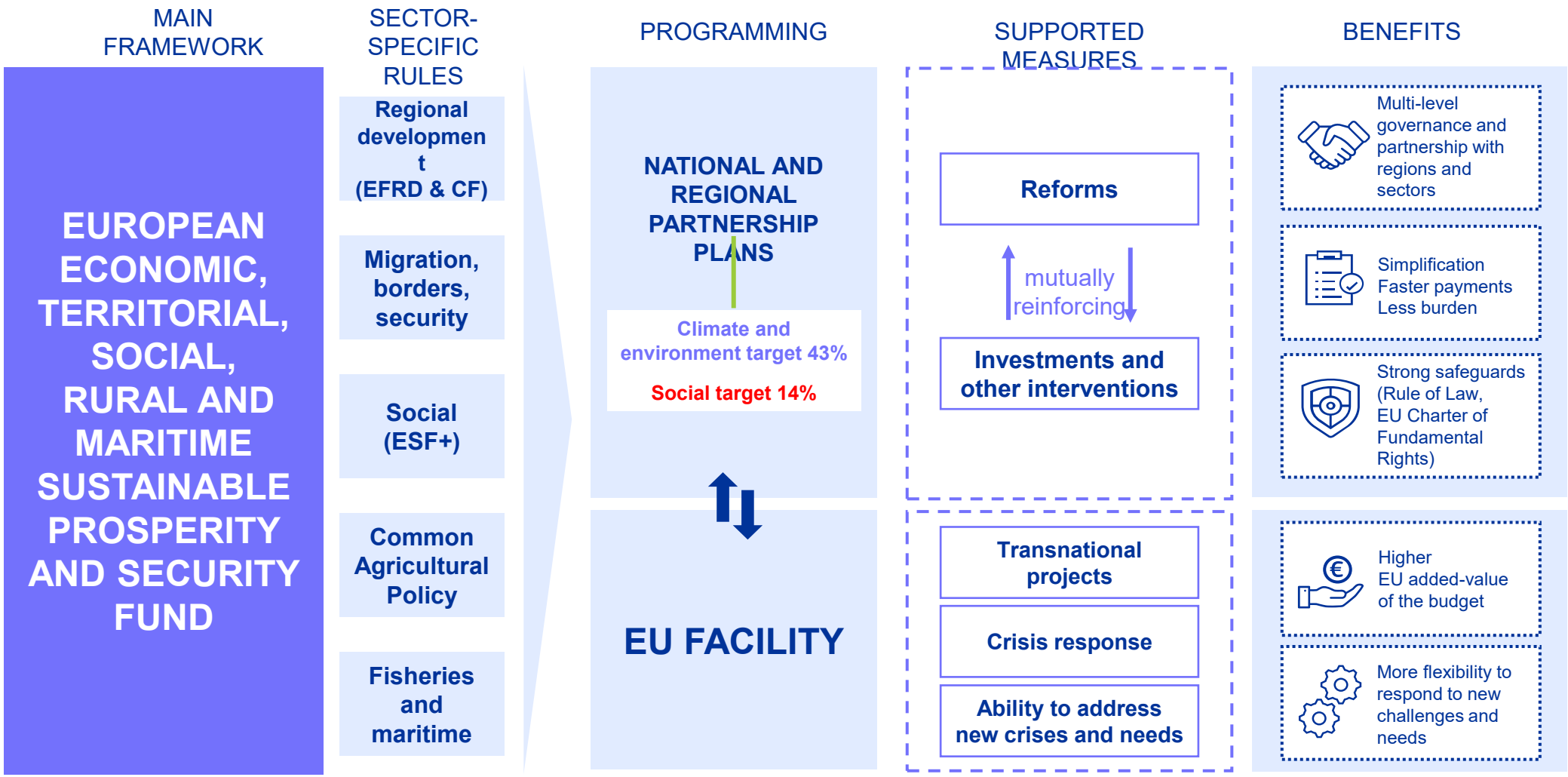
Dynamic exchange with the **future EU Skills Intelligence Observatory** for labour market insights

European Commission

MFF 2028 – 2034
National and Regional Partnership Plans and the European Social Fund

European Commission

National and Regional Partnership Plans



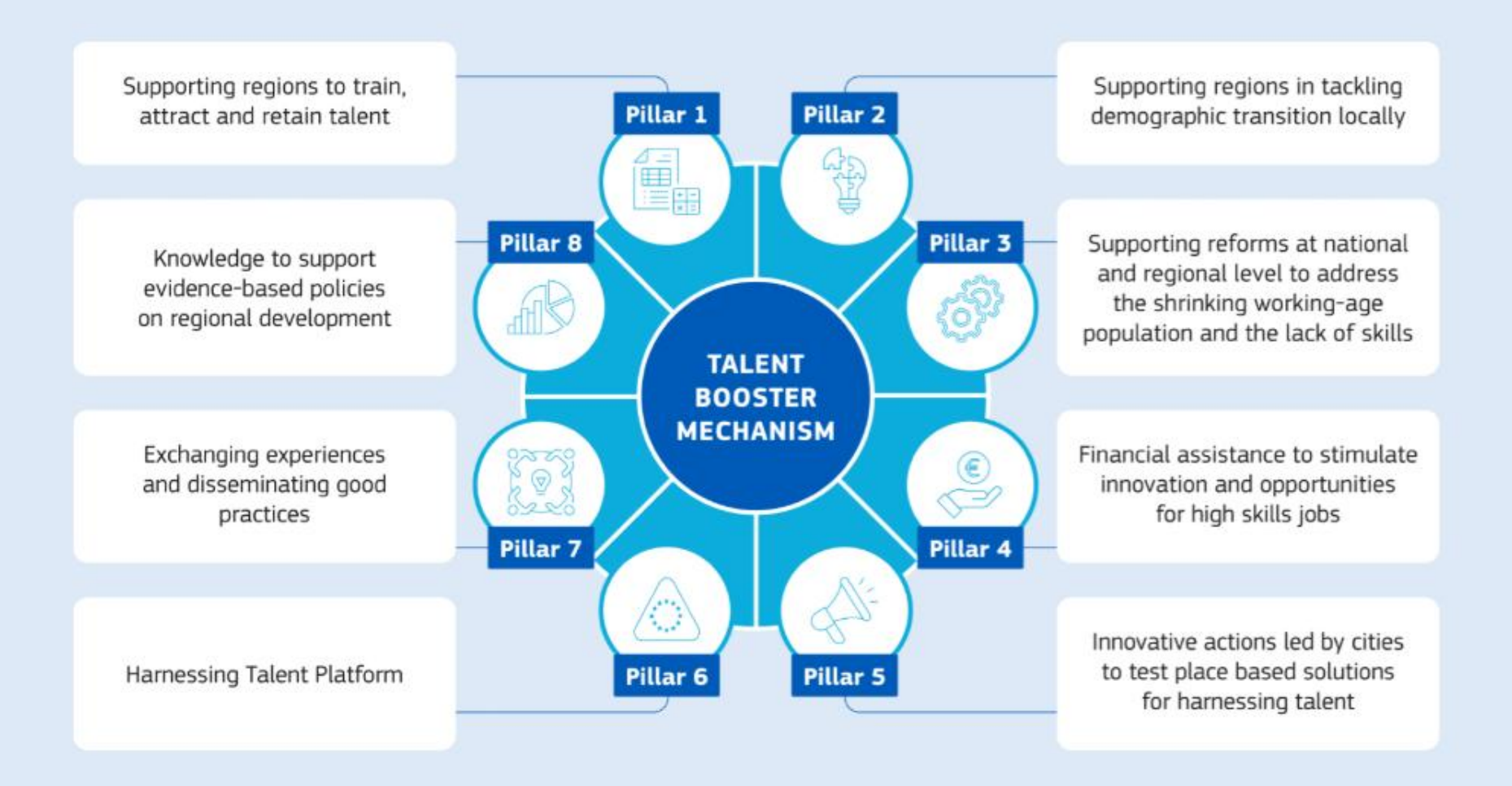
European Commission

The European Social Fund (ESF)

- **The ESF is set out in its own self-standing regulation.**
- The ESF contributes, in particular, to the following **general objectives**
  - **support quality employment, education and skills and social inclusion** [Art. 2 (b) of NRPP Reg.]
  - **protect and strengthen democracy in the Union and uphold Union values in accordance with Article 2 TEU**' [Art. 2 (e) of NRPP Reg.]
- Skills relevant **specific objective:** *"to strengthen social cohesion by supporting people and strengthening the Union's societies and the Union's social model by enhancing labour supply and improving* ***education and lifelong acquisition of skills, in particular by promoting upskilling*** **and** ***reskilling****."* [Art. 3(1)(c)(ii)]
- Steered by **the European Semester** and **the Employment guidelines.**
- Implementation in **shared management** through the National and Regional Partnership Plans in close **partnership** between the Commission, the Member States, regions, local communities and relevant stakeholders such as social partners and civil society organisations.

European Commission

Talent Booster Mechanism



[Inforegio - Talent Booster Mechanism]

European Commission



https://ec.europa.eu/social/PactforSkills

EC-PACT-FOR-SKILLS@ec.europa.eu

UPCOMING SEFS WG ACTIVITIES

- ERRIN online Skills talks
  - #1 **Skills for Resilience:** 13 May 11-12 CET
  - #2 **EIT Skills Academies:** TBC
  - #3 **Skills for innovative policymaking:** TBC

- 25 June: **Skills in the next MFF and Erasmus+**



Register [here]

UPCOMING SEFS WG ACTIVITIES

- Transport WG: **Funding and policy frameworks for clean and resilient mobility** – **26 March** 10:00 - register here
- Policy roundtable on **S3 in the next MFF** – **14 April** at 14:00 at the House of Dutch Provinces – **save the date**
- Policy WG meeting: **Update on ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027, ERA Act and link with Horizon Europe** – **postponed until April 2026 –** learn more here
- Bioeconomy WG: **From Policy to Practice: Regions at the Heart of Europe's Bioeconomy and Biotech Innovation** 16 April at 10:00 – register here
- ICT WG: **AI and Public administration** – 23 April 14:00 – register here

For more: please check the ERRIN Calendar here

