

# Desk Research

## SUMMARY REPORT



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Digital upskilling of the existing ageing workforce  
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# Desk research

# SUMMARY REPORT

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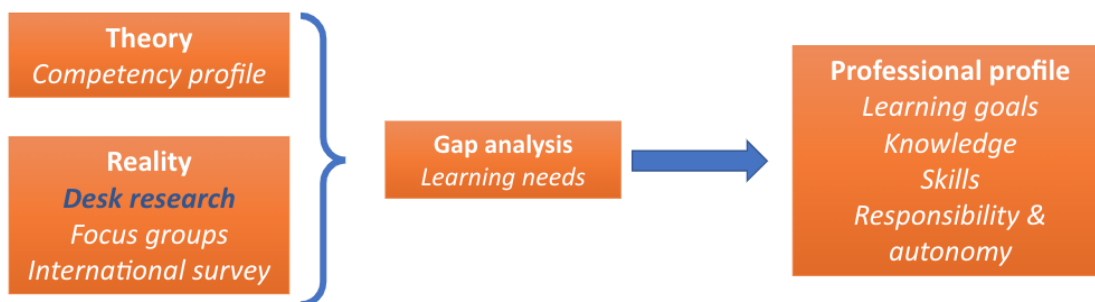
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## Introduction

The summary desk-research report is providing information on the context, for each country (Belgium, Finland, France, Poland, Slovenia), about current scene of the ageing workforce and digital transition. Thus, it is a critical element in the definition of learning needs and, consequently, the professional profile (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Scheme of the working plan for the Professional profile



Promoting employment opportunities for an ageing workforce requires new thinking in the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The aim of the project DIG-AGE+ is to train and empower a novel aged workforce capable of dealing with remote working change accompanying the digital transition of companies.

The **main goal** of the conducted desk research was **to understand the digital transition of ageing workforce in each partner country (Belgium, Finland, France, Poland and Slovenia)**. As a result, the learning program will be able to encourage participants from each country to reflect on the main difficulties and opportunities they may encounter regarding ageing workforce and digital competences due to digitalization.

The goal was as well to improve the capacity of SMEs to encourage its workforce to new training opportunities, contributing to their professional development and performance - improve the capacity of education/ training centers and institutions, SMEs representatives, as well as all the players and organizations involved, to work at the transnational level and to improve their capacities for the global digital transition.



We took into account **office clerks<sup>1</sup> and other clerks<sup>2</sup>** that are a composite group of occupations who mainly record, organize, store and retrieve information related to the office tasks and questions (CEDEFOP, 2019). Around 17 million people were employed as office, accounting and support clerks in 2018. Employment and occupation decreased by 10 per cent between 2006 and 2018. Employment is projected to decrease by further 13% over the period 2018 to 2030 - a loss of more than 2 million jobs. In the workplace using ICT, being autonomous and evaluating information are the most important tasks and skills of office and other clerks. Other supported clerks are expected to suffer cut downs in all sectors, especially low and medium qualified workers. The skills required for these clerks have changed considerably in recent years due to outsourcing, specialization, technological change and globalization. Some tasks are being replaced by computers and software applications; clerks will need to strengthen the skills that are resilient to automatization (CEDEFOP, 2019).

The research is revolving around **ageing workforce and digital transition**. The analysis of the information gathered for each country is allowing us to conclude the state of art of ageing workforce and the digital competences of this target group to cope with the challenges of digital transformation of companies. It is revealing the needs on the side of the ageing workforce and on the side of employers (SMEs).

Specifically, the research aimed to learn about the following topics in **each country**:

1. Recent data about structure of ageing workforce/ statistics
2. Changes on working due to the digitalization and any good practice/s, any existing ICT-based learning environment/ specific training programs on digital skills
3. Ageing workforce regulations applicable

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<sup>1</sup> Office clerks carry out a range of clerical and administrative activities related to recording, organising, storing and retrieving information; compiling accounting, bookkeeping, financial and other numerical data; and sorting and delivering mail, filing documents, preparing information for processing, maintaining personnel records, etc. The types of job undertaken by office clerks includes: secretaries, typists and data entry clerks, accounting and bookkeeping clerks, payroll clerks, mail carriers and sorting clerks, scribes, filing and copying clerks, and personnel clerks. They usually need to have completed the first-stage of secondary education but in some instances they will need to have completed the second-stage of secondary education, perhaps by undertaking specialised vocational education and training (CEDEFOP, 2019)..

<sup>2</sup> Other support clerks are engaged in sorting and delivering mail, filing documents, preparing information for processing, maintaining personnel records, etc. They usually need to have completed the first-stage of secondary education but in some instances they will need to have completed the second-stage of secondary education, perhaps by undertaking specialised vocational education and training. The tasks carried out by people in this occupation includes: recording information on the issue and return of library books; classifying and filing various documents; maintaining personnel records; performing a range of miscellaneous clerical duties. The types of job classified to this occupation includes: library clerks, personnel clerks, filing and copying clerks, etc (CEDEFOP, 2019)..

# 1. Ageing workforce<sup>3</sup>

## 1.1. Employment and activity by sex and age – annual data

### 1.1.1. Data 55-64 (all partner countries)

**The employment rate of people aged 55 to 64 reaches a record level in 2021 in all partner countries.** An increase of 38,0% was noted in Belgium between 2012 and 2021; 17,3% in Finland; 25,6% in France; 45,5% in Poland, 60,1% in Slovenia. **These values exceed the average increase of 36,8% in all EU countries in the same time period, except in Finland and in France where the values already exceeded the EU average in the same time period.** Finland has the highest employment rate of people aged 55-64 of total population (68,3%) in comparison to the average of 54,5% in other partner countries. As well the employment rate of male population aged 55-64 is the highest (67,9%) in Finland, followed by Poland (67,4%), while the other partner countries reach the average value of 58,0%. The employment rate of women aged 55-64 is far the highest in Finland (68,8%), while the average of other 4 partner countries is at 48,9%.

**We observed as well the wider group of employed people aged 50+ (50-64 years). Total employment rates of this age group have increased in all partner countries significantly in the observed time period from 2012 until 2021.** In Belgium they increased for 19,0%, in Finland for 11,3%, in France for 12,8%, in Poland for 27,7%; and in Slovenia for 34,4%. The increase in EU countries was in this time period 17,4%. **Slovenia and Poland have faced major changes in structure of elderly employed people.** Regarding gender and employment rates of male aged 50+ in all partner countries they increased: in Belgium for 13,3%; Finland 13,2%, France 11,0%; Poland 27,7% and Slovenia 27,3%. The average employment rate of male in EU countries increased for 13,8%. Slovenia and Poland again faced the highest increase rates, while France and Finland were below the EU average. For the employment rates of women we observe a slightly different picture as for men – still, in all partner countries there is high increase, the highest in Slovenia 43,8%, followed by Poland 30,3%, Belgium 26,5%, than we have lower increases of employment rates for women in France 14,3% and in Finland 9,6%. The EU average increased for 21,6%.

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<sup>3</sup> Statbel, *Belgium in figures*.

<https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/work-training/labour-market/employment-and-unemployment>

### 1.1.2. Data 50-64 (all partner countries)

**If we look at the data for people aged 50+ for 2012 and for 2021, we get the following picture.**

In **2012** the total employment rate of people aged 50+ in Slovenia and Poland was lagging behind the EU average for 16,4% or 13,8%, in Belgium for 8,5%, while in France and Finland these values were above the EU average for 1% or 15%. The picture changed in **2021** when all partner countries, except Finland (+9,1%), lagged behind the EU average (Belgium for 7,3%, Poland for 6,2%, Slovenia for 4,3% and France for 2,9%).

The employment rate of men aged 50+ was in **2012** lagging behind the EU average the most (17,0%) in Slovenia, followed by Poland (10,2%) and Belgium (7,6%), it was as well lagging behind the EU average in France (5,6%) and in Finland (0,1%). In **2021** the situation was the same, all employment rates of men were lagging behind the EU average, the most in Belgium (8%), followed by France (7,9%), Slovenia (7,2%), Poland (1,2%) and Finland (0,7%). In Slovenia and in Poland the gap between the EU average and countries' values became smaller.

The employment rate of women aged 50+ was in **2012** well above the EU average in Finland (33,5%) and France (9,1%), while in Poland (17,4%), Slovenia (16,4%) and Belgium (10,3%) it was lagging behind the EU average. In **2021** the differences between the EU averages and partner countries' employment rates for women were not as big as in 2012. In Finland the employment rate of women 50+ was the highest, exceeding EU average by 20,4%, in France it exceeded the EU average by 2,6%, in Poland the employment rate of women 50+ was 11,6% below the EU average, in Belgium 6,7% below the EU average and in Slovenia only 1,1% below the EU average. Especially in Slovenia the situation has significantly improved with regard to the employment of women 50+.

**Eurostat data do not indicate that the Covid pandemic would negatively affect employment growth in the 50+ age group, regardless of gender.** In Belgium, Finland, France, Poland and Slovenia employment grew (according to Eurostat), although of course we cannot say for sure what its level would be, if not for the pandemic. **Nevertheless, the data shows an increase without a deceleration trend. It is worth adding that this is not a feature of age, because the pandemic in general was very kind to the employed.**

### 1.1.3. Data 55-64 (per partner country)

In **Belgium** 54.5% of people aged **55-64** were employed in 2021. Over the past 20 years, the percentage of people aged 55 and over with a job has risen sharply. In 2000, 26.3% of 55-64-year-olds were employed, in 2010 this was 37.3%. The % of total employed was below the average value of EU in 2012 for 0,5% and above it for 0,4% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 55-64 in Belgium increased for 28,9% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was still 14,6% below the EU average in 2012 and 11,5% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 55-64 has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 49,8%. In 2012

the % of employed women in this age group was below the EU average for 16,6% and in 2021 still for 8,6%. Also in 2020, a year in which Belgium was hit by the Covid-19 crisis, an increase in the percentage of people aged 55 and over with a job was noted.

In **Finland** 68,3% of people aged 55-64 were employed in 2021. The % of total employed exceeded the average value of EU in 2012 for 46,6% and for 25,8% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 55-64 in Finland the highest in partner countries. It has increased for 19,9% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 5% above EU average in 2012 and 1,3% above the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 55-64 has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 15,2% and is far above averages of EU in this time period, and highest of all the partner countries. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group exceeded EU average for 50,4% and in 2021 still for 26,7%. During the Covid-19 pandemic the values were increasing.

In **France**, according to INSEE (National statistical Institute and economical studies) they report a difference in terms of employed 55+ women and of employed 55+ men in 2021. 55,9% of people aged 55-64 are employed in 2021. The % of total employed exceeds the average value of EU in 2012 for 12,1% and for 2,9% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 55-64 in France has increased for 21,0% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 11,9% under EU average in 2012 and 14,2% under the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 55-64 has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 30,5%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group exceeded EU average for 4,8% and in 2021 for 0,3%. Since the end of the pandemic the % of 55+ employment has risen steadily.

In **Poland**, since the political transformation after 1989, the employment rate of people over 50 has continued to decline. This was due to the change in the economic model and the fact that many people lost their jobs in existing sectors. Even a few years after Poland joined the European Union, these indicators were clearly lower than the European average. In 2008, only every third person aged 55-64 worked - the employment rate for this age group was then 31.6% only!<sup>4</sup> The % of total employed was below the average value of EU in 2012 for 5,3% and for 0,7% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 55-64 in Poland increased for 41,3% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 11,5% below EU average in 2012 and 0,6% above the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 55-64 has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 50,7%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group was below EU average for 27,9% and in 2021 still for 20,6%.

In **Slovenia** - according to the Eurostat, historically, Slovenia - Employment rate of older workers, age group 55-64 reached a record high of 49.90% in December of 2020 and a record low of 30.90% in December of 2011. The % of total employed is below the average value of EU in 2012 for 17,1% and for 2,9% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 55-64 in Slovenia increased for 40,3% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 24,5% below EU average in 2012 and 14,8% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 55-64 has

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<sup>4</sup> 50plus.gov.pl (2014). *Aktywizacja zawodowa osób 50+ (Professional activation of people 50+)*  
<http://50plus.gov.pl/web/50plus/aktywizacja-zawodowa-osob-50-roz poczyna-sie-ogolnopolaska-kampania-informacyjnopromocyjna-40365>

increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 94,0%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group was below EU average for 37,0% and in 2021 still for 10,7%.

#### 1.1.4. Data 50-64 (per partner country)

When we look at a wider age group (**50+**) in **Belgium**, the employment rate of people aged 50+: 62,4% of people aged **50+** were employed in 2021. The % of total employed was below the average value of EU in 2012 for 8,5% and below it for 7,3% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 50+ in Belgium has increased for 13,3% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was still 7,6% below the EU average in 2012 and 8,0% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 50+ has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 26,4%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group was below the EU average for 10,3% and in 2021 still for 6,7%. Also in 2020, a year in which Belgium was hit by the Covid-19 crisis, an increase in the percentage of people aged 50+ with a job was noted. In **Finland** 73,4% of people aged 50+ were employed in 2021. The % of total employed exceeded the average value of EU in 2012 for 15,0% and for 9,1% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 50+ is in Finland the highest in partner countries. It has increased for 13,2% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 0,1% below the EU average in 2012 and 0,7% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 50+ has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 9,6% and is far above averages of EU in this time period, and highest of all the partner countries. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group exceeded EU average for 33,5% and in 2021 still for 20,4%. During the Covid-19 pandemic the values in Finland were slightly decreasing. In **France** the employment rates of people aged 50+ have considerably increased between 2012 and 2021. In 2021, 65,3 % of 50+ age group were employed in France. The % of total employed exceeded the average value of EU in 2012 for 1,0% and was below the EU average 2,9% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 50+ in France has increased for 11,0% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 5,6% below the EU average in 2012 and 7,9% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 50+ has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 14,3%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group exceeded EU average for 9,1% and in 2021 only for 2,6%. During the COVID-19 crisis, 50+ age group employees in France were slightly impacted by the pandemic as their employment rates decreased below the 65% employment mark, age as the only factor considered in the collection of data. In France, according to the data collected by INSEE we can observe a sustainable and continuous increase in employment for the 50+ age group regardless of gender. In **Poland** in 2021 63,1 % of 50+ age group were employed. The % of total employed was below the average value of EU in 2012 for 13,8% and 6,2% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 50+ in Poland has increased for 25,1% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was 10,2% below the EU average in 2012 and 1,2% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 50+ has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 30,2%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group is below EU average for 17,4% and in 2021 only for 11,6%. In **Slovenia** employment rate of older workers, age group 50+, had a record low of 30,90% in December of 2011. In 2021 64,4% of 50+ age group were employed. The % of total employed was below the average value of EU in 2012 for 16,4% and for 4,3% in 2021. The % of employed male aged 50+ in Slovenia has increased for 27,3% in the time period from 2012 to 2021. It was

17,0% below EU average in 2012 and 7,2% below the EU average in 2021. The % of employed women aged 50+ has increased in the period 2012 until 2021 for 43,8%. In 2012 the % of employed women in this age group was below EU average for 16,4% and in 2021 only for 1,1%.

**Table 1: Employment rates as % of the population 55 to 64 (2012 – 2021), sex and age, partner countries**

Source of data : Eurostat Sex: <b>Total</b> Age: From <b>55 to 64 years</b> Unit: Percentage of total population	TIME	European Union - 27 countries	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
	2012	39,7	39,5	58,2	44,5	37,6	32,9
	2013	41,4	41,7	58,5	45,6	39,5	33,5
	2014	43,4	42,7	59,1	46,9	41,4	35,4
	2015	45,2	44,0	60,0	48,7	43,4	36,6
	2016	47,4	45,4	61,4	49,9	45,4	38,5
	2017	49,4	48,3	62,5	51,3	47,7	42,7
	2018	51,0	50,3	65,4	52,3	48,4	47,0
	2019	52,3	52,1	66,8	53,1	49,0	48,6
	2020	53,1	53,1	67,5	53,8	51,1	50,5
	2021	54,3	54,5	68,3	55,9	54,7	52,7
	Source of data : Eurostat Sex: <b>Males</b> Age: From <b>55 to 64 years</b> Unit: Percentage of total population	TIME	European Union - 27 countries	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland
2012		53,9	46,0	56,6	47,5	47,7	40,7
2013		55,1	47,7	56,5	48,4	49,8	41,8
2014		56,6	48,4	56,8	48,8	51,7	41,8
2015		58,1	48,9	57,4	50,7	52,8	42,6
2016		60,2	50,7	59,8	51,6	54,6	43,6
2017		62,2	53,8	61,7	52,8	57,4	48,0
2018		64,0	55,1	64,3	54,2	59,0	52,2
2019		65,3	57,3	64,8	55,5	60,2	53,2
2020		65,6	58,4	66,6	56,8	62,7	54,4
2021		67,0	59,3	67,9	57,5	67,4	57,1
Source of data : Eurostat Sex: <b>Females</b> Age: From <b>55 to 64 years</b> Unit: Percentage of total population		TIME	European Union - 27 countries	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland
	2012	39,7	33,1	59,7	41,6	28,6	25,0
	2013	41,4	35,8	60,5	43,0	30,3	25,2
	2014	43,4	37,0	61,4	45,2	32,2	29,0
	2015	45,2	39,3	62,5	46,9	34,9	30,5
	2016	47,4	40,2	63,0	48,2	37,2	33,4
	2017	49,4	42,8	63,4	49,9	38,9	37,5
	2018	51,0	45,6	66,5	50,4	38,8	41,9
	2019	52,3	47,0	68,6	50,9	38,9	44,0
	2020	53,1	47,8	68,4	51,8	40,7	46,6
	2021	54,3	49,6	68,8	54,3	43,1	48,5

Source:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA\\_ERGAED\\_custom\\_2990593/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA_ERGAED_custom_2990593/default/table?lang=en)

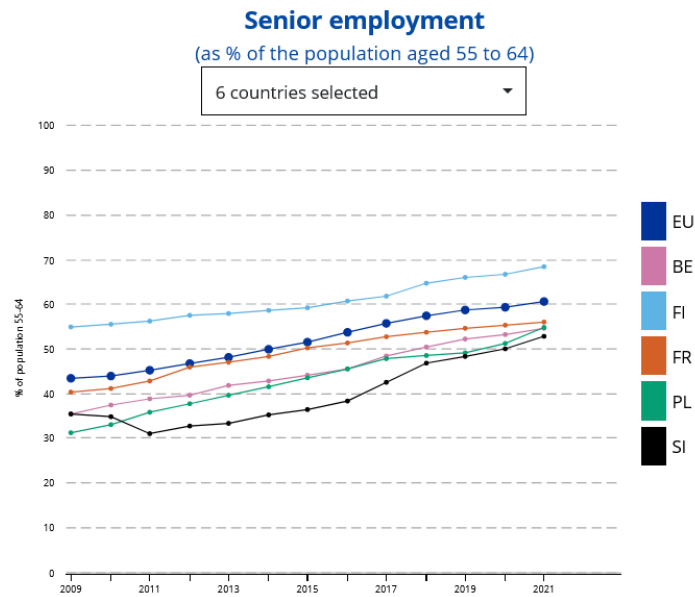
**Table 2: Employment rates as % of the population 50 to 64 (2012 – 2021), sex and age, partner countries**

Source of data : Eurostat Sex: <b>Total</b> Age: From <b>50 to 64</b> <b>years</b> Unit: Percentage of total population	TIME	European Union - 27 countries	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
	2012	<b>57,3</b>	52,4	65,9	57,9	49,4	47,9
	2013	<b>58,1</b>	54,0	66,2	58,5	50,3	48,0
	2014	<b>59,4</b>	54,7	66,7	59,6	51,8	49,9
	2015	<b>60,7</b>	55,0	67,3	60,6	53,2	51,2
	2016	<b>62,4</b>	56,6	68,2	61,5	54,7	52,6
	2017	<b>64,0</b>	58,5	69,7	62,3	56,6	56,5
	2018	<b>65,4</b>	60,4	72,1	63,2	57,5	60,2
	2019	<b>66,5</b>	61,2	72,7	63,8	58,3	61,3
	2020	<b>66,7</b>	61,7	73,0	64,9	60,3	62,3
	2021	<b>67,3</b>	62,4	73,4	65,3	63,1	64,4
Source of data : Eurostat Sex: <b>Males</b> Age: From <b>50 to 64</b> <b>years</b> Unit: Percentage of total population	TIME	European Union - 27 countries	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
	2012	<b>64,5</b>	59,6	64,4	60,9	57,9	53,5
	2013	<b>65,0</b>	60,5	64,4	61,5	58,9	53,9
	2014	<b>66,1</b>	60,6	64,8	61,9	60,3	54,6
	2015	<b>67,3</b>	60,6	65,5	62,7	61,1	56,1
	2016	<b>68,9</b>	62,5	67,4	63,3	62,6	55,8
	2017	<b>70,5</b>	64,3	68,9	64,2	64,6	60,2
	2018	<b>72,0</b>	65,4	71,2	65,6	65,9	64,1
	2019	<b>73,0</b>	66,3	71,1	66,0	67,2	64,5
	2020	<b>73,0</b>	66,9	71,9	66,5	69,5	65,4
	2021	<b>73,4</b>	67,5	72,9	67,6	72,5	68,1
Source of data : Eurostat Sex: <b>Females</b> Age: From <b>50 to 64</b> <b>years</b> Unit: Percentage of total population	TIME	European Union - 27 countries	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
	2012	<b>50,5</b>	45,3	67,4	55,1	41,7	42,2
	2013	<b>51,6</b>	47,5	68,0	55,8	42,4	41,9
	2014	<b>53,1</b>	48,8	68,5	57,5	44,0	45,2
	2015	<b>54,5</b>	50,5	69,0	58,7	45,9	46,3
	2016	<b>56,2</b>	50,8	69,0	59,8	47,5	49,4
	2017	<b>57,8</b>	52,7	70,4	60,6	49,3	52,9
	2018	<b>59,1</b>	55,4	73,0	61,1	49,8	56,3
	2019	<b>60,3</b>	56,1	74,2	61,7	50,0	58,1
	2020	<b>60,6</b>	56,5	74,1	62,6	51,7	59,2
	2021	<b>61,4</b>	57,3	73,9	63,0	54,3	60,7

Source:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA\\_ERGAED\\_custom\\_2990593/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA_ERGAED_custom_2990593/default/table?lang=en)

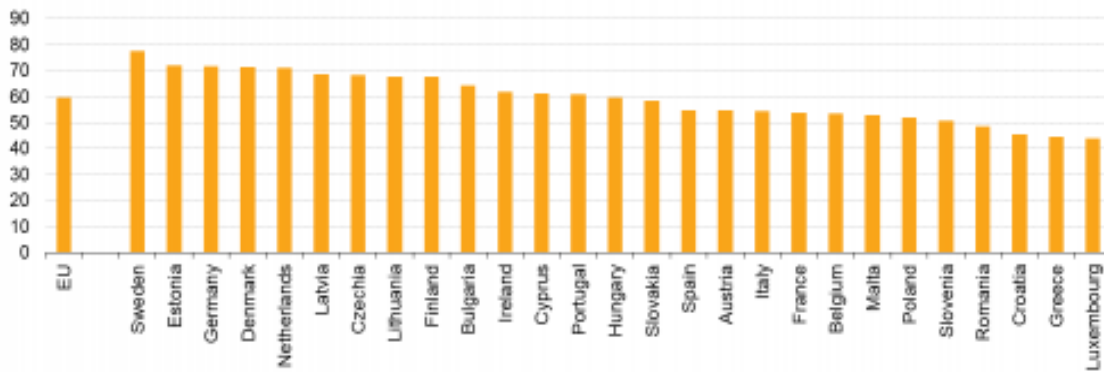
**Figure 2: : Employment of seniors (55-64) in the partner countries and the European Union average**



Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment - annual\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment - annual_statistics)

**Figure 3: Employment rates for the age group 55 to 64 in the EU (all partner countries), (2020, %)**

**Employment rates for the age group 55 to 64 in the EU (2020, %)**



German data for 2020 is preliminary  
 Source: Eurostat (online data code: ifsi\_emp\_a)



Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment\\_rates\\_%E2%80%93\\_annual\\_statistics&oldid=558071#More\\_persons\\_aged\\_55-64\\_in\\_employment](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment_rates_%E2%80%93_annual_statistics&oldid=558071#More_persons_aged_55-64_in_employment)



**Table 3: Employment of seniors in the project countries and the European Union average (in 2021, percentage of total population)**

GEO/TIME	2021
European Union - 27 countries	60,5
Belgium	54,5
France	55,9
Poland	54,7
Slovenia	52,7
Finland	68,3

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment - annual statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment_-_annual_statistics)

## 1.2. Active Ageing Index<sup>5</sup>

In the following figures (3-7) the Active Aging Index (AAI) for all partner countries is shown. In Belgium, Finland and France they are above the EU average of 35,8 (Belgium 5,3% above, Finland 13,9% above, France 7,7% above) while in Poland and Slovenia they are below the average of EU (Poland 13,4%, Slovenia 13,1%). In all partner countries AAI development trends in the period from 2010 to 2018 have been positive for both genders.

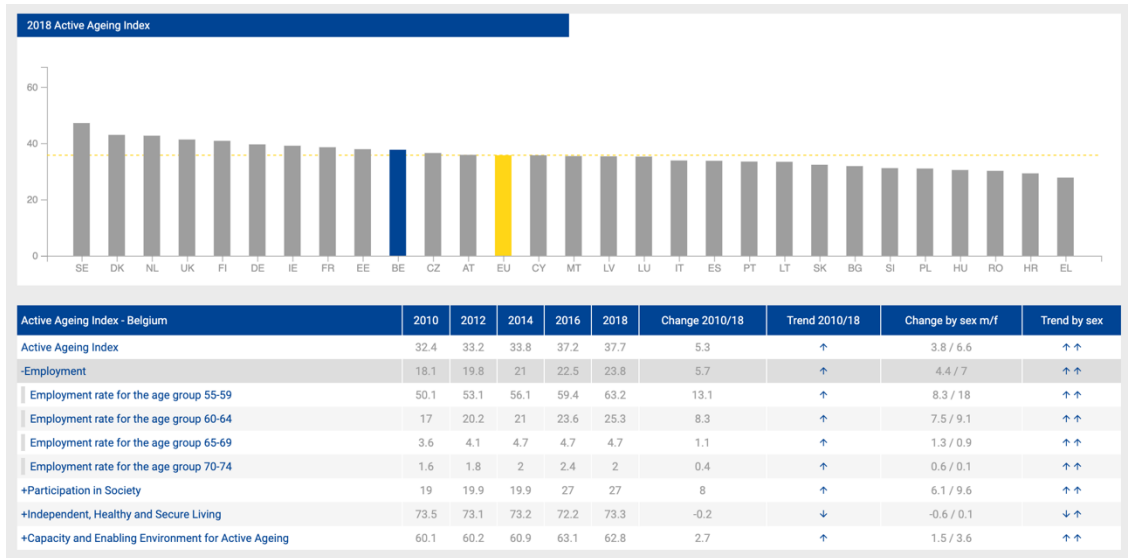
*(The Active Ageing Index is a tool to measure the untapped potential of older people for active and healthy ageing across countries. It measures the level to which older people live independent lives, participate in paid employment and social activities, and their capacity to age actively.)*

### 1.2.1. BELGIUM

Belgium's AAI (Release 2018) is 37,7 (EU average is 35,8). Employment rate for the age group 55-59 was 63,2 and for the age group 60-64: 25,3. Belgium scores (a little) above the EU-average.

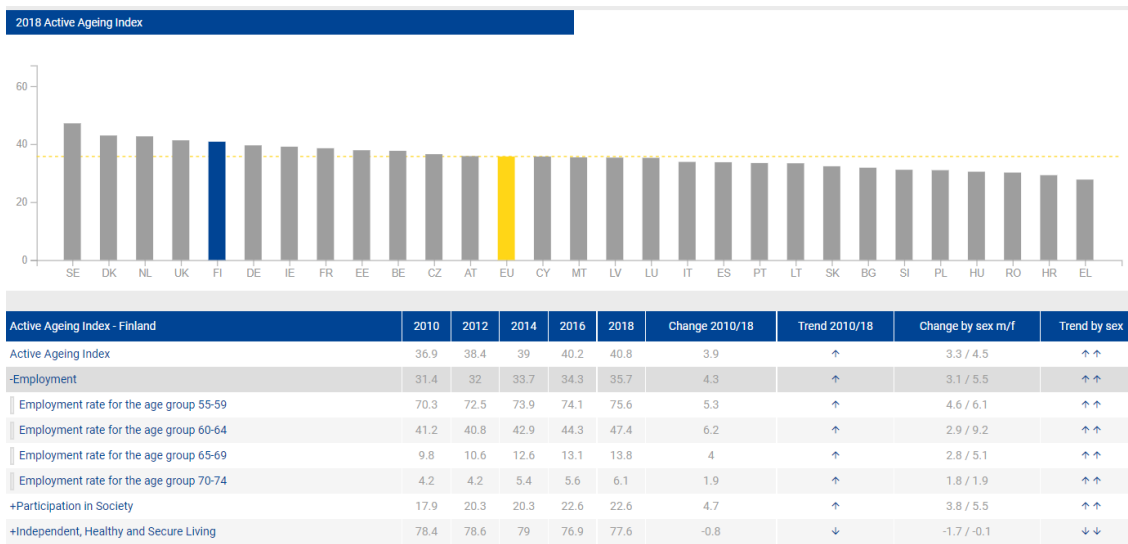
<sup>5</sup> Active Ageing Index:

[https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active\\_Ageing\\_Index/Stakeholder\\_Meeting/ACTIVE\\_AGEING\\_INDEX\\_TRENDS\\_2008-2016\\_web\\_cover\\_reduced.pdf](https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/Stakeholder_Meeting/ACTIVE_AGEING_INDEX_TRENDS_2008-2016_web_cover_reduced.pdf)

**Figure 4: 2018 Active Ageing Index Belgium**

 Source: <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/active-ageing-index/active-ageing-index/profiles/BE>

## 1.2.2. FINLAND

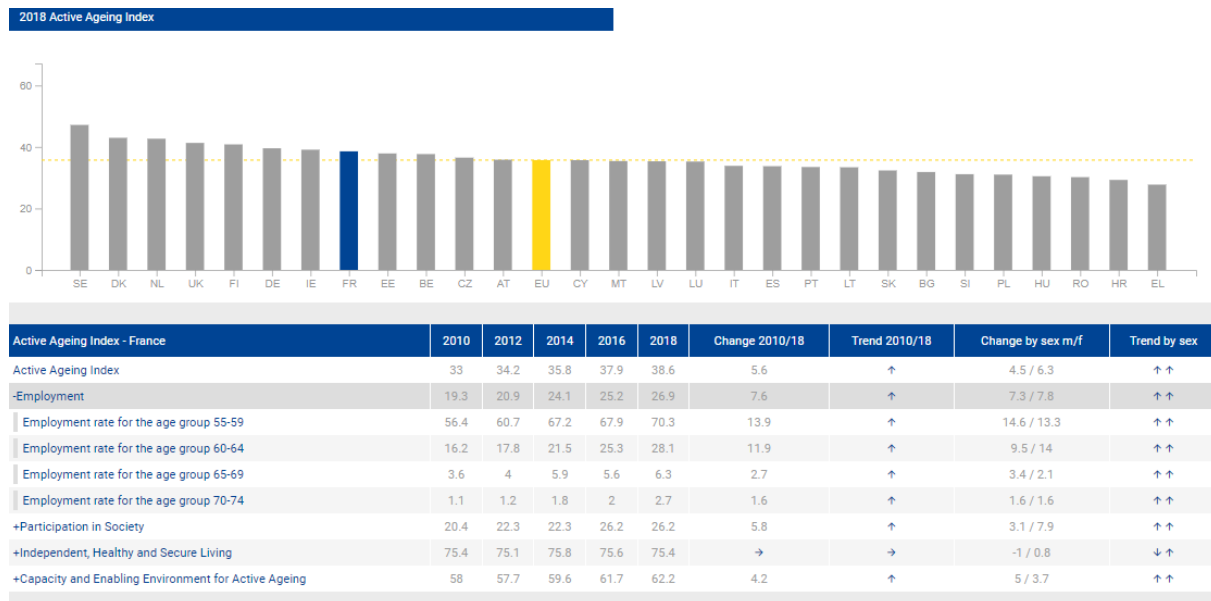
Finland's AAI (Release 2018) is 40,8 (EU average is 35,8). Employment rate for the age group 55-59 was 75,6 and for the age group 60-64: 47,4. Finland scores (well) above the EU-average.

**Figure 5: 2018 Active Ageing Index Finland**

 Source: <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/active-ageing-index/active-ageing-index/profiles/FI>

### 1.2.3. FRANCE

France AAI (release 2018) is 38, 6 (EU average is 35, 8). Employment rate for the age group 55 – 59 was 70.3 % and for the age group 60 – 64: 28.1 %. This score puts France above EU-average ranking.

**Figure 6: 2018 Active Ageing Index France**

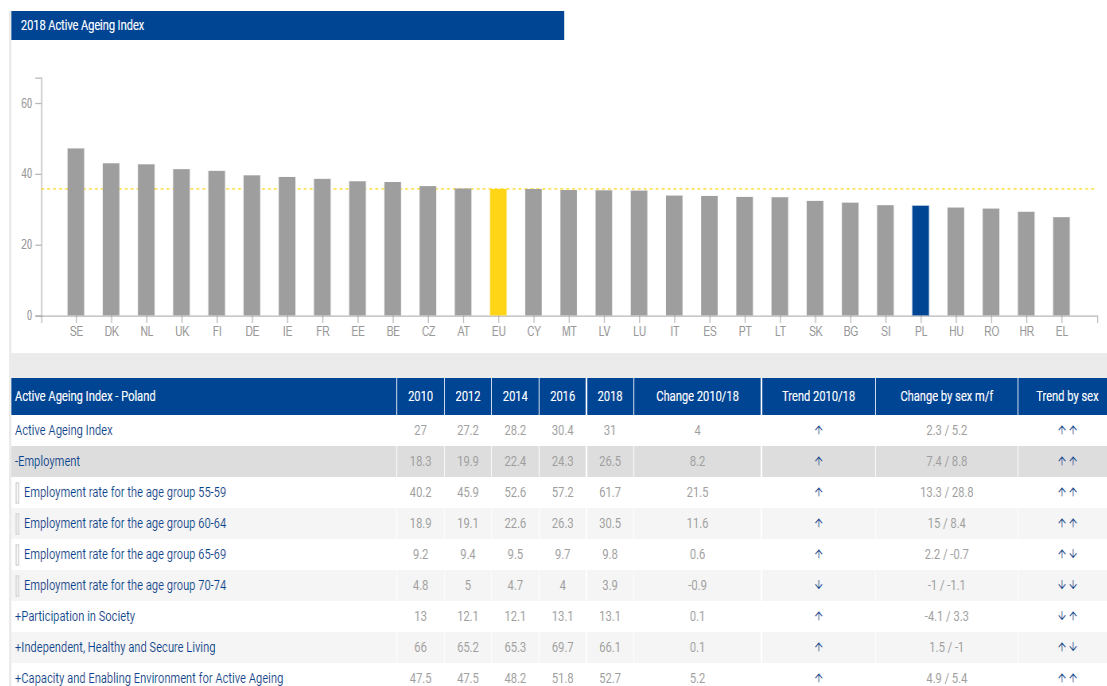


Source: <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/active-ageing-index/active-ageing-index/profiles/FR>

### 1.2.4. POLAND

Polish AAI (Release 2018) is 31,0 (EU average is 35,8. Employment rate for the age group 55-59 was 61,7 (in 2010 it was only 40,2). This means a significant reduction in unemployment in this group in less than one decade. However, it should be remembered that people in this age group are still in the productive age. Employment rates above 60 percent should not be treated as unusual here. The problem is the collapse of employment in subsequent age groups. For the age group 60-64 it is 30,5. Poles quit their jobs quite early. This is often associated with reaching retirement age, even if the pensions are then very low. This score puts Poland below EU-average ranking.

**Figure 7: 2018 Active Ageing Index Poland**

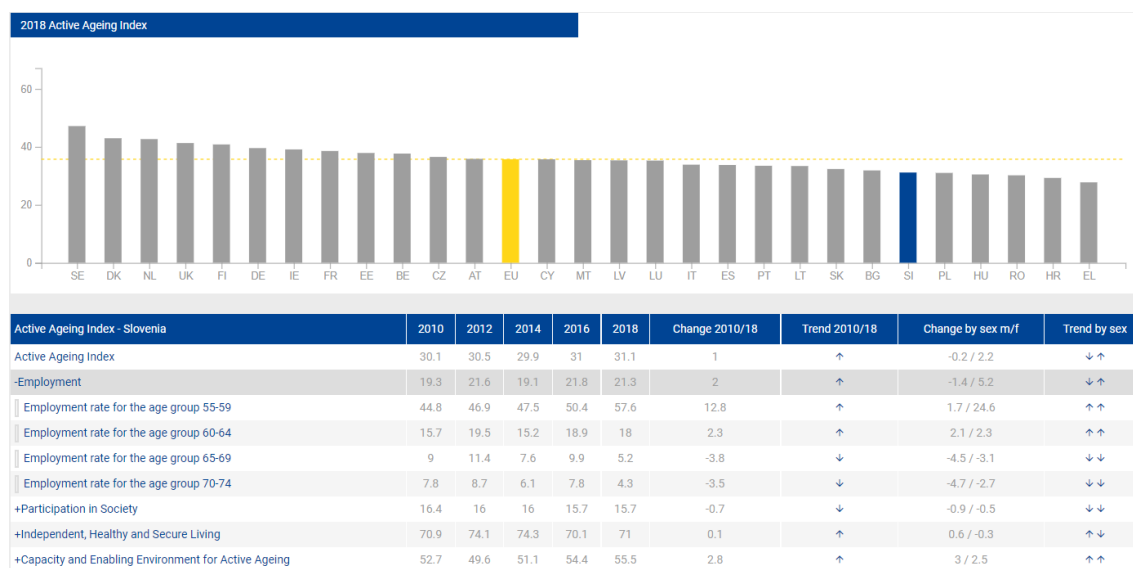


Source: <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/active-ageing-index/active-ageing-index/profiles/PL>

### 1.2.5. SLOVENIA

Slovenia's AAI (Release 2018) is 31,1 (EU average is 35,8). Employment rate for the age group 55-59 was 68,6 and for the age group 60-64: 24,0. Slovenia scores below the EU-average.

**Figure 8: 2018 Active Ageing Index Slovenia**



Source: <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/active-ageing-index/active-ageing-index/profiles/SI>

## 1.3. Unemployment rate 50+ by gender

### 1.3.1. General findings

**In most partner countries data about unemployment rate 50+ by gender is not provided.**

On general in Belgium a lower rate of unemployment of women is observed. **The lowest unemployment rate is recorded among highly-skilled people (3.6%), inhabitants of the Flemish Region (3.9%) and people aged 50-64 (4.3%). No data for 50+ by gender is provided.**

In Finland the unemployment rate of people aged 45-54 was 5.7% (February 2022), which showed a slight -0.5% decrease of unemployment from the previous year. Regarding men, a decrease of -2.3% was recorded, and for women, an increase of 1.4% in unemployment. For the age group 55-64, there was an increase of 4.2% of unemployment. Regarding gender, there was a notable increase of 5.0% in unemployment for men, whereas for women, the data shows only a slight increase of 0.1% . ([http://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2022/02/tyti\\_2022\\_02\\_2022-03-22\\_tau\\_016\\_fi.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2022/02/tyti_2022_02_2022-03-22_tau_016_fi.html) (16 Sep 2022))

In France the results (2021) show that there has been an overall, slight decrease of unemployment of - 0,1 % for 50 + age group. Regarding gender, there was the biggest **decrease in unemployment of - 0,4 % for 50+ age group of men**. Regarding women a slight **increase of unemployment of + 0,1 % for 50+ age group** was shown.

In Poland data show an increase in the number of registered unemployed in labor offices (from 2020), but the overall trend of unemployment is decreasing. The only relevant data provided for 2020 show a **- 4% decrease in unemployment of 45+ age people**. There are no detailed data broken down by age or gender (50+).

In Slovenia **the share of people 50+ in total unemployment in May 2022 is 40,1%**. In the age group **50+ the share of unemployed women is 48%**. The monthly ILO unemployment rate was at 3.9% in May 2022, by 0.6 of a percentage point lower than in May 2021. In May 2022, the unemployment rate among men was 3.7% and among women 4.2% (not defined for the age group 50+).

**The common finding is that increase in employment and the decline in unemployment will in all partner countries continue in 2022 and, albeit at a slower pace, over the next two years, although this will be increasingly characterised by constraints related to labour availability impacted by demographic trends.**

### 1.3.2. Unemployment rate 50+ by gender (per partner country)

#### 1.3.2.1 BELGIUM

New results of the Labour Force Survey in Belgium: Statbel, the Belgian statistical office, published recently the results of the Labour Force Survey for 2021. After Belgium was able to limit the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the labour market in 2020 thanks to various support measures, such as the temporary unemployment scheme and the bridging right for the self-employed, there is a clear recovery in employment in 2021. The number of people employed increased by 51,000 persons between 2020 and 2021. If the former international definitions had still applied, this would even mean an increase of 91,000 persons. In this publication with the annual figures from the Labour Force Survey, a closer look at some key labour market indicators was taken.

- In order to achieve an employment rate of 80% in 2030, more than 600,000 additional persons need to be employed.
- The ILO unemployment rate of people aged 15-64 amounts to 6.3%. This unemployment rate is higher in 2021 than in 2020 (5.6%). When the Covid-19 crisis broke out in March 2020.
- The unemployment rate of women has been since 2012 below that of men. In 2020, the difference between the unemployment rate of men and women was 0.4 percentage points. In 2021 that difference has become 0.8 percentage points: the unemployment rate is 5.9% for women and 6.7% for men.
- 42% of the unemployed are long-term unemployed, which means that they have been out of work and looking for a job for at least a year. 22.3% of the unemployed have been unemployed for at least two years.

The negative effect of the Covid-19 crisis on the employment rate in 2020 was counterbalanced in 2021.

In Belgium, the highest unemployment rate is observed among non-EU27 citizens (21%), young people (18.2%), low-skilled people (14.7%) and inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region (12.5%) (Chart 7). **The lowest unemployment rate is recorded among highly-skilled people (3.6%), inhabitants of the Flemish Region (3.9%) and people aged 50-64 (4.3%).**

#### 1.3.2.2 FINLAND

According to Statistics Finland's Labour Force Survey 2022, employment in Finland has continued to grow and the employment rate has increased by 6.8% of all age groups compared to the situation a year earlier, the overall employment rate being 74% in early 2022.

The results showed that the overall decrease in the unemployment rate was -1.6% when compared to the previous year. Regarding gender, men from all age groups experienced an overall decrease of unemployment of -2.0%. The rate of women fell by -1.2%. The

unemployment rate of women is below that of men in most cases, and due to the notable rise in the rate of men in age group 55-64, the rate of women is significantly better compared to that of men, 6.2% and 12.4%, respectively.

The highest unemployment rates for both genders can be found among the age group 15-24. However, the rate fell by a third from the previous year which was also the biggest decrease in all age groups. On the other hand, the increase in the unemployment rates seem to focus on the elder part or the working population as the rate rose by 2.4% for both genders among the age group 55-64.

**Table 4 Unemployment rates by sex and age 2021/02 - 2022/02**

		Year/Month		Change
		2021/02	2022/02	2021/02 - 2022/02
		Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Sex	Age group			
Both sexes	15-74	8,3	6,7	-1,6
	15-64	8,5	6,8	-1,6
	15-24	21,9	14,5	-7,3
	25-34	9,2	3,6	-5,6
	35-44	5,7	5,6	-0,1
	45-54	6,2	5,7	-0,5
	55-64	6,7	9,1	2,4
Males	15-74	9,4	7,4	-2,0
	15-64	9,7	7,6	-2,0
	15-24	26,1	14,8	-11,3
	25-34	8,9	3,2	-5,7
	35-44	6,2	6,5	0,2
	45-54	8,5	6,1	-2,3
	55-64	7,4	12,4	5,0
Females	15-74	7,1	5,9	-1,2
	15-64	7,2	6,0	-1,2
	15-24	17,3	14,3	-3,0
	25-34	9,5	4,1	-5,4
	35-44	5,2	4,7	-0,4
	45-54	3,8	5,2	1,4
	55-64	6,1	6,2	0,1

Source: Unemployment rates by sex and age 2021/02 - 2022/02 . Helsinki: Statistics Finland [referred: 16.9.2022]; [http://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2022/02/tyti\\_2022\\_02\\_2022-03-22\\_tau\\_016\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2022/02/tyti_2022_02_2022-03-22_tau_016_en.html)

Even though Finland was not severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate of women fell significantly right after the pandemic reached Finland in March 2020. The effects were not long term as they were counterbalanced in 2021.

### 1.3.2.3 FRANCE

INSEE, National statistical Institute and economical studies, published the latest data regarding unemployment rate according to age and gender.

The results show that there has been an overall decrease of -0.1% of the overall percentage of unemployed all age group combined 15 -50 +, an increase of + 0.3% for the 15 - 24 age group, decrease - 0,2% for 25- 49 age group and a slight decrease of - 0,1 % for 50 + age group.

Regarding gender, men from all age group combined have experienced an overall (slight) decrease in unemployment of - 0,2%, a decrease of - 0.1% for the 15 - 24 age group, decrease - 0,2% for 25- 49 age group and the biggest decrease of - 0,4 % for 50 + age group. Finally, regarding women all age groups combined have stabilized the unemployment rate around 0%, an increase of + 0.8% for the 15 - 24 age group, decrease - 0,2% for 25- 49 age group and a slight increase of + 0,1 % for 50 + age group.

The data collected show that the unemployment rates have stabilized around 0% with very slight variations in increase and decrease according to age and gender. Thus, the difference in variation between Trimester 1 and 4 of 2021 and 2019 show that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, France has had an overall rapid decrease of unemployment, highest unemployment rate since 2008.

**Table 5: ILO unemployment rate<sup>6</sup>, France**

	En % de la population active		Variation en points depuis			Milliers
	2021T4	2022T1	2021T4	2021T1	2019T4	2022T1
<b>Personnes au chômage</b>	<b>7,4</b>	<b>7,3</b>	<b>-0,1</b>	<b>-0,8</b>	<b>-0,9</b>	<b>2 232</b>
15-24 ans	16,0	16,3	0,3	-4,5	-5,2	527
25-49 ans	6,8	6,6	-0,2	-0,8	-0,7	1 176
50 ans ou plus	5,7	5,6	-0,1	0,1	-0,2	530
<b>Hommes</b>	<b>7,5</b>	<b>7,3</b>	<b>-0,2</b>	<b>-1,1</b>	<b>-1,0</b>	<b>1 144</b>
15-24 ans	17,0	16,9	-0,1	-3,5	-3,4	288
25-49 ans	6,7	6,5	-0,2	-1,0	-0,9	589
50 ans ou plus	5,9	5,5	-0,4	-0,6	-0,5	266
<b>Femmes</b>	<b>7,3</b>	<b>7,3</b>	<b>0,0</b>	<b>-0,5</b>	<b>-0,8</b>	<b>1 089</b>
15-24 ans	14,9	15,7	0,8	-5,5	-7,2	238
25-49 ans	6,9	6,7	-0,2	-0,6	-0,5	586
50 ans ou plus	5,5	5,6	0,1	0,7	0,0	264
<i>Personnes au chômage de longue durée</i>	<i>2,2</i>	<i>2,2</i>	<i>0,0</i>	<i>-0,3</i>	<i>0,0</i>	<i>684</i>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/6443412>



### 1.3.2.4 POLAND

The Central Statistical Office in Poland has prepared a study “Selected aspects of the labor market in Poland. Economic activity of the population before and during the COVID – 19 pandemic period”<sup>7</sup>.

The data show an increase in the number of registered unemployed in labor offices (from 2020), but the overall trend of unemployment is decreasing. There are no detailed data broken down by age or gender but in the same report we can find more interesting stats according to the age.

**Table 6: Economic activity of population by age (2020), Poland**

**Tablica 1.4. Aktywność ekonomiczna ludności według wieku**

Table 1.4. Economic activity of the population by age

Wyszczególnienie Specification	2020							
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
	w tysiącach in thousands				analogiczny kwartał 2019 r. = 100 corresponding quarter in 2019 = 100			
<b>Pracujący</b> <b>Employed persons</b>								
15-24 lata years	1095	1112	1156	1124	98,7	86,7	82,9	81,6
25-34	4095	4085	4054	4007	97,3	95,6	96,1	97,0
35-44	4720	4772	4799	4836	102,4	100,8	101,6	101,2
45-54	3587	3710	3722	3685	104,2	101,4	103,0	105,5
55-64	2429	2445	2494	2449	99,7	100,1	102,0	104,7
65 +	348	360	393	366	106,0	107,8	103,3	110,9
<b>Bezrobotni</b> <b>Unemployed persons</b>								
15-24 lata years	127	129	140	96	81,1	78,3	97,9	140,6
25-34	205	140	144	133	78,0	112,1	118,1	98,5
35-44	152	136	119	107	77,0	95,6	96,6	113,1
45+	181	143	130	150	82,3	96,5	106,9	96,0
<b>Bierni zawodowo</b> <b>Economically inactive persons</b>								
15-24 lata years	2355	2310	2227	2277	97,4	103,7	105,5	104,3
25-34	765	791	769	778	100,8	101,8	97,4	96,3
35-44	721	705	716	710	99,3	104,3	96,6	95,5
45-54	766	689	701	745	94,1	104,6	96,7	88,6
55-64	2499	2464	2393	2405	95,7	94,8	92,2	88,8
65 +	6258	6295	6317	6399	102,9	102,9	103,2	102,7

<sup>7</sup> A. Zagierska. *Wybrane aspekty rynku pracy w Polsce. Aktywność ekonomiczna ludności przed i w czasie pandemii COVID-19* (2021), Główny Urząd Statystyczny: [https://stat.gov.pl/download/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/5818/11/1/1/wybrane\\_aspekty\\_rynk\\_u\\_pracy\\_w\\_polsce\\_aktynosc\\_ekonomiczna\\_ludnosci\\_przed\\_i\\_w\\_czasie\\_pandemii\\_covid-19.pdf](https://stat.gov.pl/download/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/5818/11/1/1/wybrane_aspekty_rynk_u_pracy_w_polsce_aktynosc_ekonomiczna_ludnosci_przed_i_w_czasie_pandemii_covid-19.pdf)

### 1.3.2.5 SLOVENIA

New results of the Labour Force Survey in Slovenia show that in the first quarter of 2022, the unemployment rate was 4.3%, 0.2 of a percentage point lower than in the previous quarter. We saw an increase in the employment rate. (<https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/en/News/Index/10364>)

In the first quarter of 2022, there were 44,000 unemployed persons in Slovenia, 2,000 or 5% fewer than in the previous quarter and 11,000 or 21% fewer than in the same period of 2021. The unemployment rate was 3.9% for men and 4.7% for women. Unemployment rates for both men and women fell by 0.2 of a percentage point compared to the previous quarter. The number of unemployed men fell by about 3,000 or 11% compared to the previous year, while the number of unemployed women fell by about 9,000 or 28%.

The monthly ILO unemployment rate was at 3.9% in May 2022, by 0.1 of a percentage point lower than in April 2022 and also lower than in May 2021 (by 0.6 of a percentage point). We estimate that there were 40,000 unemployed persons in the age group 15–74 in May 2022, of whom 51% were men and 49% were women. In May 2022, the unemployment rate among men was 3.7% and among women 4.2%. (<https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/en/News/Index/10432>).

The share of people 50+ in total unemployment in May 2022 is 40,1%. In the age group 50+ the share of unemployed women is 48%.

**Table 7: Economic activity of population by age (2020- 2021 Q1), Slovenia**

Economic activity of population by age (2020-2021 Q1)

	<b>Unemployed m (in 000)</b>									
<b>50-64</b>	11	12	11	10	12	9	12	11	11	
<b>55-64</b>	5	7	7	5	5	5	8	7	7	

Source: (<https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatData/pxweb/sl/Data/-/0762003S.px/table/tableViewLayout2/>)

The increase in employment and the decline in unemployment will continue in 2022 and, albeit at a slower pace, over the next two years, although this will be increasingly characterised by constraints related to labour availability impacted by demographic trends.

## 1.4. Unemployment by educational level

In table 7 the unemployment rates by education level<sup>8</sup> for all the partner countries in comparison with the OECD indicators' value are shown.

This indicator shows the unemployment rates of people according to their education levels: below upper secondary, upper secondary non-tertiary, or tertiary. The unemployed are defined as people without work but actively seeking employment and currently available to start work. This indicator measures the percentage of unemployed 25-64 year-olds among 25-64 year-olds in the labour force.

**Education still has a significant impact on the unemployment level in all partner countries, but in Poland it is relatively low even among the least educated citizens. In Finland the below upper secondary and upper secondary non tertiary unemployment rates are higher than the OECD average while the tertiary level is lower. In France all values exceed the OECD average indicators values. In Belgium and in Slovenia the values are almost equal, but still below the OECD average. In Poland all the values are significantly lower than the OECD average.**

**Table 8: Unemployment rates by educational level by partner countries**

Level	OECD	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
Below upper secondary	10,8	10,7	11,9	11,8	8,2	9,7
Upper secondary non-tertiary	6,6	4,9	7,3	7,4	2,8	4,9
Tertiary	4,6	3,2	4,2	4,7	1,8	3,0

<sup>8</sup> *Unemployment rates by education level (2021)*, OECD. <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/unemployment-rates-by-education-level.htm>

## 1.5. Employability rate of 50+ clerks, office clerks and other

**Clerks** (according to the definition provided by ISCO Major Group 4 Clerical Support Workers<sup>9</sup>) record, organise, store, compute and retrieve information, and perform a number of clerical duties in connection with money-handling operations, travel arrangements, requests for information, and appointments. The tasks performed by clerks usually include: stenography, typing, and operating word processors; entering data into computers; carrying out secretarial duties; keeping records relating to stocks; etc. Their jobs include: typists and word processing operators, bank tellers and related clerks, telephone switchboard operators, receptionists, etc.

Most occupations in this major group require completion of the first stage of secondary education, but some occupations will require the completion of the second stage of secondary education.

**Office clerks**<sup>10</sup> carry out a range of clerical and administrative activities related to recording, organising, storing and retrieving information; compiling accounting, bookkeeping, financial and other numerical data; and sorting and delivering mail, filing documents, preparing information for processing, maintaining personnel records, etc. The types of job undertaken by office clerks includes: secretaries, typists and data entry clerks, accounting and bookkeeping clerks, payroll clerks, mail carriers and sorting clerks, scribes, filing and copying clerks, and personnel clerks. They usually need to have completed the first-stage of secondary education but in some instances they will need to have completed the second-stage of secondary education, perhaps by undertaking specialised vocational education and training.

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<sup>9</sup> [ISCO Major Group 4 Clerical Support Workers - Open Risk Manual](#)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/42,0skills-intelligence/countries?country=BE&occupation=4.41&sector=#15>

### 1.5.1. Employability rate of 50+ clerks, office clerks and other – general findings

**Table 9: Employment of clerks by partner countries (2020)**

CLERKS	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
Total employment clerks	549.800	123.800	2.094.700	1.055.400	77.000
50+ clerks	150.386	42.587	703.819	212.135	23.485
% of women in employment of clerks	60,8	70,8	74,8	57,4	56,5
Employment of clerks across sectors in %					
- Manufacturing	10,3	8,2	5,4	19,3	22,1
- Health & Social care	6,1	6,1	9,3	5,5	7,0
- Education	4,8	4,0	3,8	5,0	3,0
- Public sector & defense	18,0	7,5	20,1	10,5	7,6
- Finance & insurance	8,7	10,3	9,8	3,7	9,2
- Arts & recreation	5,0	8,8	4,0	2,8	4,8
- Administrative services	6,2	5,7	4,3	2,6	2,4
- Professional services	5,9	9,7	10,2	4,2	4,6
- ICT services	2,1	3,6	1,6	1,1	3,1
- Transport & storage	12,7	14,1	13,0	18,8	13,9
- Wholesale & retail	13,2	12,2	10,3	16,5	13,5
- Construction	4,1	3,7	3,4	3,2	4,1
Employment of clerks by education in %					
- Low level	8,8	7,6	9,5	1,8	4,3
- Medium level	49,2	46,8	52,1	62,0	65,0
- High level	42,0	45,6	38,4	36,2	30,7
Employment of clerks by age in %					
- 15-24	5,5	10,6	6,7	9,7	5,7
- 25-49	61,7	52,9	59,0	68,9	63,2
- 50-64	31,9	34,4	33,6	20,1	30,5

The highest number of **clerks age 50+** is employed in France, followed by Poland, Belgium, Finland and Slovenia, while **the highest share of clerks age 50+** is in Finland (34,%), followed by France (33,6%), Belgium 31,9%) Slovenia (30,5%) and Poland (20,1%).

The highest share of **women** employment of clerks is in France (74,8%), followed by Finland and Belgium, with almost equal shares in Poland and Slovenia.

The most **clerks** are employed in the following sectors: **public sector and defense (France, Belgium), manufacturing (Slovenia, Poland), transport and storage (Finland, Poland, Slovenia, Belgium), wholesale and retails (Poland, Slovenia, Belgium, Finland, France) and finance and insurance (Finland).**

Most of clerks have a **medium** level of education (**average of 55,2%**; the lowest share in Finland, 46,8% and the highest in Slovenia, 65,0%), followed by clerks with a high level of education (average 38,6%; the lowest share in Slovenia, 30,7% and the highest share in Finland, 45,6%).

**The average share of 50+ age clerks is 30,1%** (the lowest share in Poland, 20,1%; the highest share in Finland (34,4%).

**Table 10: Employment of office clerks by partner countries (2020)**

OFFICE CLERKS	Belgium	Finland	France	Poland	Slovenia
<b>Total employment office clerks</b>	<b>211.600</b>	<b>34.300</b>	<b>847.300</b>	<b>339.600</b>	<b>28.300</b>
<b>50+ clerks</b>	<b>71.944</b>	<b>12.828</b>	<b>284.693</b>	<b>59.430</b>	<b>7.911</b>
<b>% of women in employment of office clerks</b>	<b>73,6</b>	<b>84,6</b>	<b>84,2</b>	<b>82,6</b>	<b>83,4</b>
<b>Employment of office clerks across sectors in %</b>					
- <b>Manufacturing</b>	9,0	13,5	2,5	13,1	16,8
- <b>Health &amp; Social care</b>	6,7	8,2	13,1	3,6	12,6
- <b>Education</b>	8,4	9,8	6,8	12,8	6,9
- <b>Public sector &amp; defense</b>	26,8	6,6	35,9	22,1	16,2
- <b>Finance &amp; insurance</b>	2,5	/	/	/	2,3
- <b>Arts &amp; recreation</b>	5,2	8,3	6,0	3,7	3,3
- <b>Administrative services</b>	5,2	/	/	/	3,7
- <b>Professional services</b>	10,0	11,2	8,1	8,0	6,3
- <b>ICT services</b>	3,0	/	/	/	4,2
- <b>Transport &amp; storage</b>	4,1	/	2,8	7,8	4,5
- <b>Wholesale &amp; retail</b>	10,7	21,4	7,6	9,1	11,6
- <b>Construction</b>	10,7	7,3	6,8	6,9	6,7
<b>Employment of office clerks by education in %</b>					
- <b>Low level</b>	5,3	11,0	9,5	/	2,4
- <b>Medium level</b>	51,3	43,3	52,1	41,6	54,5
- <b>High level</b>	43,3	45,6	38,4	58,0	43,1
<b>Employment of office clerks by age in %</b>					
- <b>15-24</b>	4,4	10,2	6,7	8,1	4,6
- <b>25-49</b>	60,2	47,4	59,0	73,2	67,4
- <b>50-64</b>	34,0	37,4	33,6	17,5	27,6

The highest number of **office clerks age 50+** is employed in France, followed by Poland, Belgium, Finland and Slovenia (the same picture as for clerks), while **the highest share of clerks age 50+** is in Finland (37,4%), followed by Belgium (34,0%), France 33,6%) Slovenia (27,6%) and Poland (17,5%).

The highest share of **women** employment of office clerks is in Finland (84,6%), closely followed by France, Slovenia and Poland, while the share for Belgium is lagging behind the other partner countries (73,6%).

The most **office clerks** are employed in the following sectors: **public sector and defense (France, Belgium, Poland, Slovenia), wholesale and retails (Finland, Slovenia, Belgium), manufacturing (Slovenia, Poland, Finland), health and social care (France, Slovenia), professional services (Finland, Belgium, France), education (Poland) and construction (Belgium).**

Most of **office clerks** have a **medium** level of education (**average of 48,6%**; the lowest share in Poland, 41,6% and the highest in Slovenia, 54,5%), followed by office clerks with a high level of education (average 45,7%; the lowest share in France, 38,4% and the highest share in Poland, 58,0%).

**The average share of 50+ age of office clerks is 30,0%** (the lowest share in Poland, 17,5%; the highest share in Finland (37,4%).

**We observed as well the future job prospects and future job openings for clerks and for office clerks.**

*The **future job prospects indicator** compares future number of job openings in a particular occupation to total employment in that occupation. If the number of future job opportunities is high compared to total employment (for example for scores above 60 it means that there will be more job openings than number of current jobs in the occupations), we say that there will be high job prospects. On the contrary, **if the score is below 40, the job prospects will be relatively low**. A score between 40-60 indicate average job prospects, i.e. the number of job openings is closer but below current employment.*

*The indicator **future job openings** provides a number of people who will be required to work in an occupation in forthcoming years. The demand for these people is broken down by: 'New/lost jobs' (it indicates net change in employment caused by creation of new jobs and destruction of some of the existing ones). It can be positive or negative, 'Replacements' (it captures the number of people needed to replace workers who changed jobs or left the labour market, such as retirees), and 'Total job openings' (the sum of 'New/lost jobs' and 'Replacements'). Although the labour market narrative often focuses on numbers of new jobs created, it is the need to replace workers leaving existing jobs that comprises most of the skills demand. More than 90 per cent of all job openings are driven by the replacement needs.*

## Future job prospects for clerks

Comparing **Future job prospects** for **Clerks** over the period 2020-2030, Poland is on the lead with **53**, while EU27 follows with **40**, Slovenia follows with **21**, while **Belgium** follows with **5**, Finland and France follow with **0**.

**In all partner countries, but in Poland, job prospects for clerks over the period 2020-2030 will be relatively low – in Poland the number of job openings will be closer but below current employment with average job prospects.**

## Future job prospects for Office clerks

Comparing **Future job prospects** for **Office clerks** over the period 2020-2030, Finland is on the lead with 32, Poland follows with 27, France follows with 25, Belgium follows with 13, while Slovenia follows with the lowest value of this indicator, 8. EU27 value is **19**.

**In all partner countries, job prospects for office clerks over the period 2020-2030 will be relatively low as all indicators' values are below 40.**

## Future job openings for clerks

Future job openings over the period 2020-2030 by pillar for **Clerks** in **Belgium** - replacements is on the lead with 190.100 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -42.100. In **Finland** replacements is on the lead with 78.200 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -17,000. In **France** replacements is on the lead with 746.800 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -353.700. In **Poland** replacements is on the lead with 327.700 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -64.800. In **Slovenia** replacements is on the lead with 21.800 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -10.700.

## Future job openings for Office clerks

Future job openings for office clerks by pillar for **Office clerks** in **Belgium** over the period 2020-2030 - replacements is on the lead with 83.700 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -21.800. In **Finland** replacements is on the lead with 23.000 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -8,800. In **France** replacements is on the lead with 364.800 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -193.800. In **Poland** replacements is on the lead with 107.900 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -2.600. In **Slovenia** replacements is on the lead with 6.900 while New/lost jobs has the lowest value, equal to -4.800.

**Total job openings for clerks in all partner countries in the period from 2020 to 2030 are: France 393.100, Poland 262.900, Belgium 148.000, Finland 61.200, Slovenia 11.100.**

**Total job openings for office clerks in all partner countries in the period from 2020 to 2030 are: France 171.000, Poland 105.300, Belgium 61.900, Finland 14.200, Slovenia 2.100.**

Job openings in partner countries are driven by **the replacement needs**.



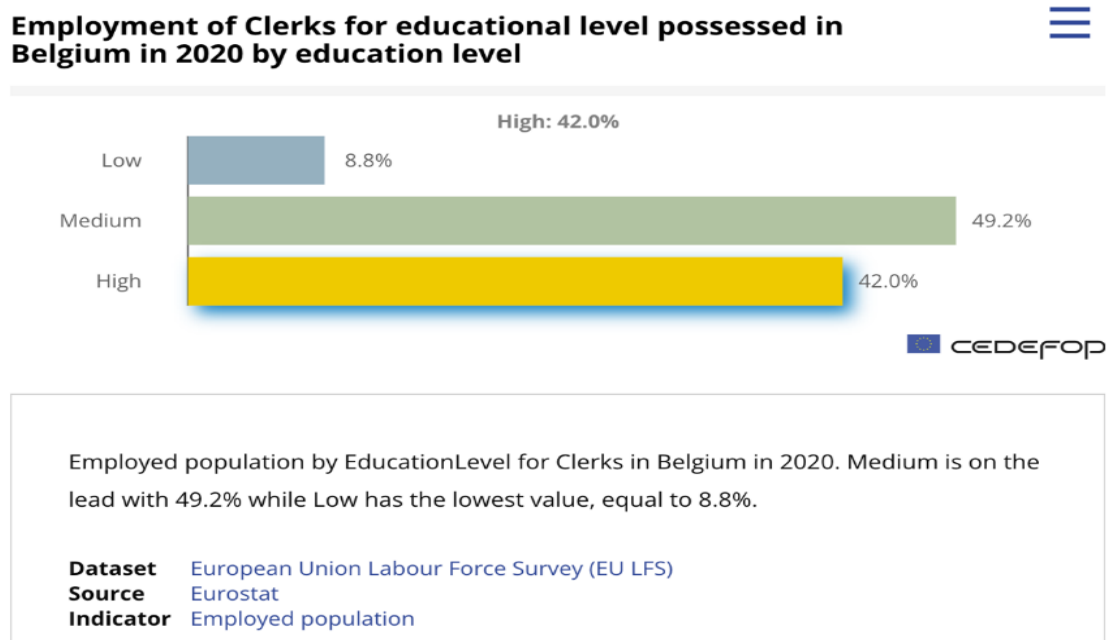
## 1.5.2. Situation by partner countries

### 1.5.2.1 Belgium

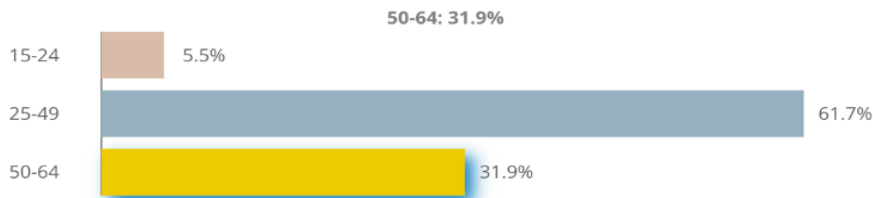
The **Belgian** economy<sup>11</sup> is an export-driven one. Important sectors in Belgium's economy include trade; transport and accommodation/food services; industry and public administration. **The Brussels region, headquarters of many international organizations, has a greater focus on financial and administrative services and its workforce comprises people with higher qualifications and good linguistic skills.** Wallonia and Flanders are more dependent on industry, and in particular the production of intermediate goods traded in the global markets.

**Employment in Belgium** regained its pre-2008 financial crisis level in 2014 and **is expected to continue to grow strongly till 2030.** Belgium's working-age population (15-64) is also projected to grow in this period, with labour market participation slightly decreasing. **Most employment growth in Belgium will be in health & social care, followed by professional services.** The occupations with most new job openings between 2020-2030 will be legal & social associate professionals and office associate professionals. **Till 2030, more than half of all job openings (including replacements for vacated jobs) in Belgium will be for high level qualifications.**

**Figure 9: Employed population by Educational level for Clerks in Belgium in 2020**



<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-intelligence/countries?country=BE&occupation=4&sector=#15>

**Figure 10: Employed population by age for Clerks in Belgium in 2020**
**Employment of Clerks in Belgium in 2020 by age**



Employed population by age for Clerks in Belgium in 2020. 25-49 is on the lead with 61.7% while 15-24 has the lowest value, equal to 5.5%.

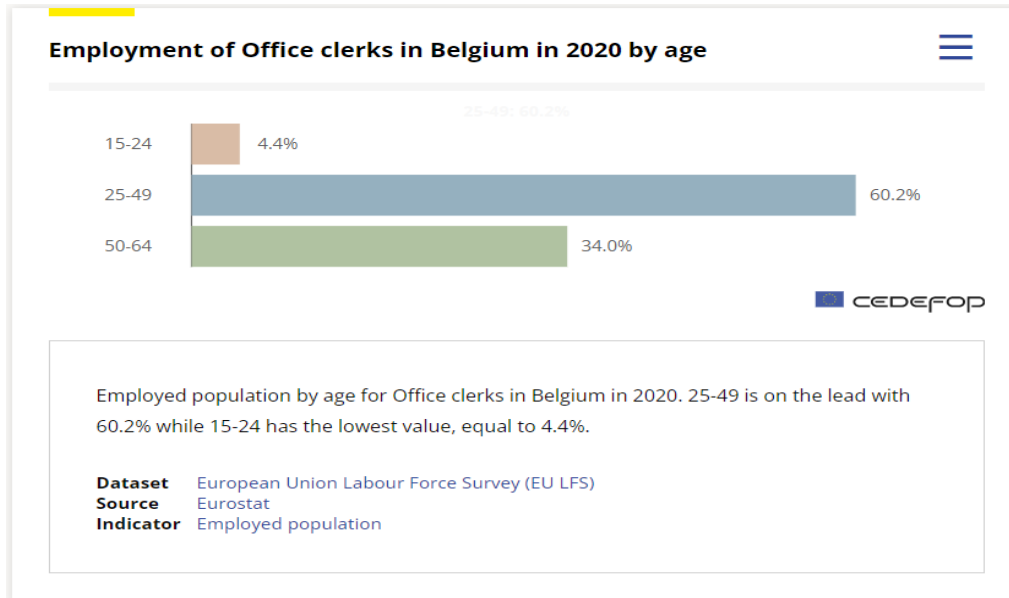
**Dataset** European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS)  
**Source** Eurostat  
**Indicator** Employed population

**Figure 11: Employed population by Educational level for Office Clerks in Belgium in 2020**
**Employment of Office clerks for educational level possessed in Belgium in 2020 by education level**



Employed population by EducationLevel for Office clerks in Belgium in 2020. Medium is on the lead with 51.3% while Low has the lowest value, equal to 5.3%.

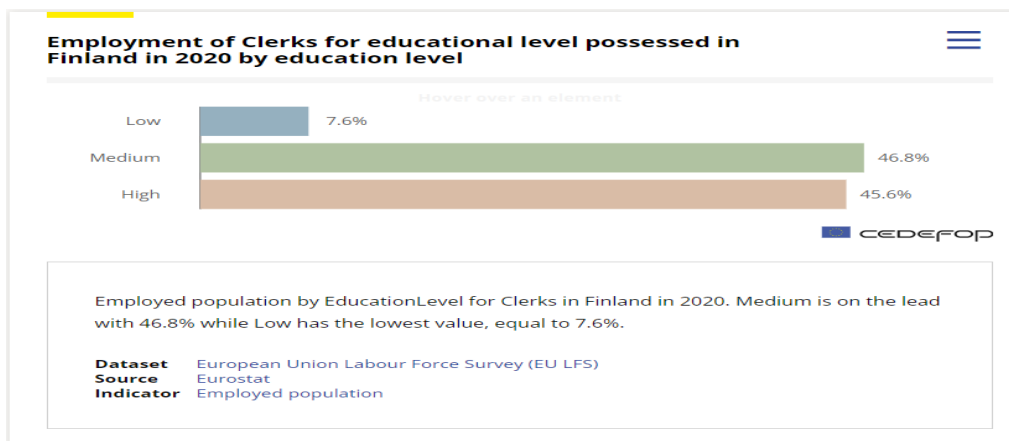
**Dataset** European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS)  
**Source** Eurostat  
**Indicator** Employed population

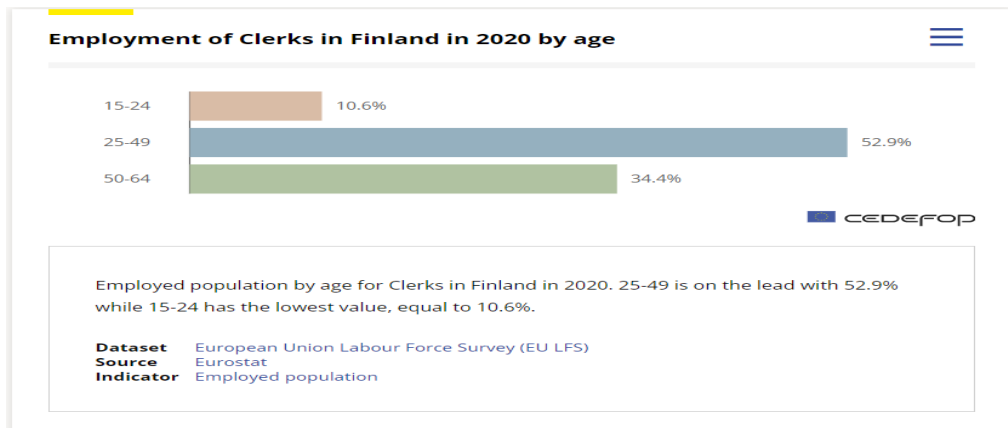
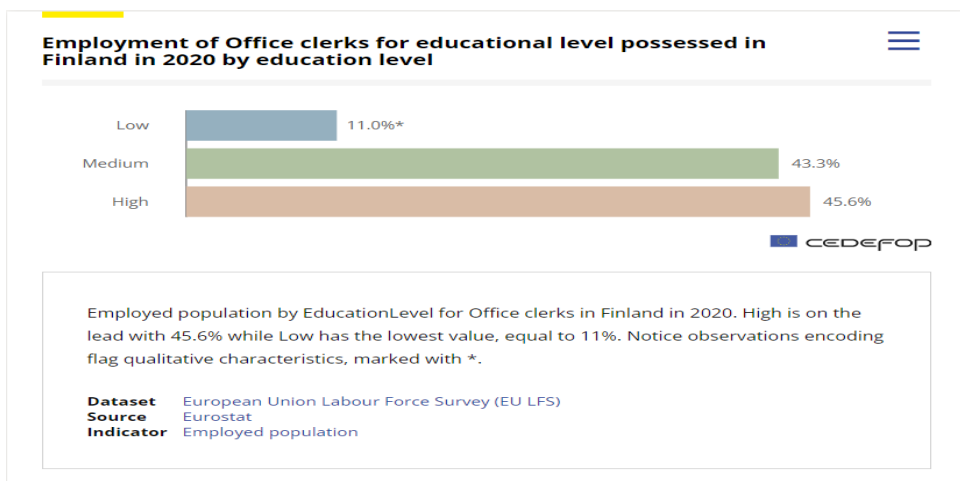
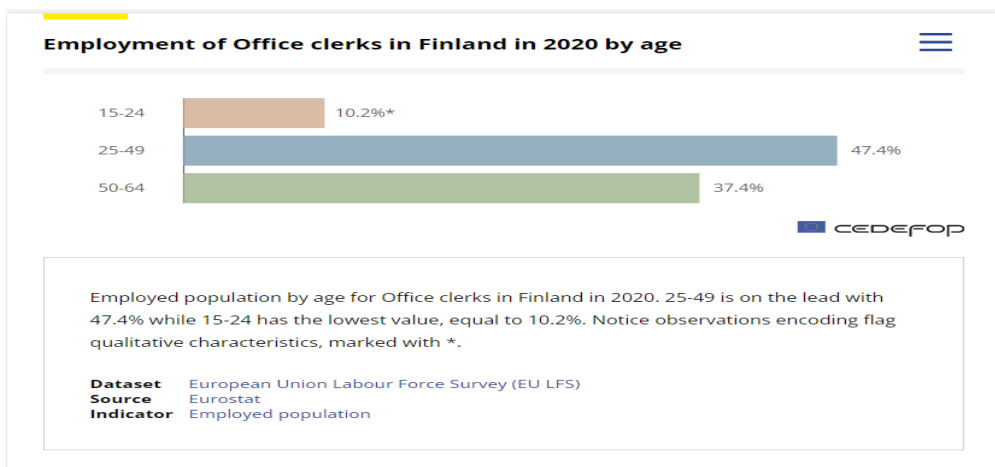
**Figure 12: Employed population by age for Office Clerks in Belgium in 2020**


### 1.5.2.2 Finland

**Finland** is among countries with most developed digital economy and society. The share of people with above basic digital skills is 50%, quite above EU average of 31%. One in 11 people is employed in high-tech economy, covering both high-tech manufacturing and knowledge intensive services like ICT or finance sectors.

**Employment in Finland is projected to grow until 2030.** Material and energy sectors - mining, production of electricity, gas or heat are expected to grow the fastest, followed by transport & storage and construction. **Construction workers, ICT professionals and office professionals should create most new jobs in 2020-2030 period.**

**Figure 13: : Employed population by Educational level for Clerks in Finland in 2020**


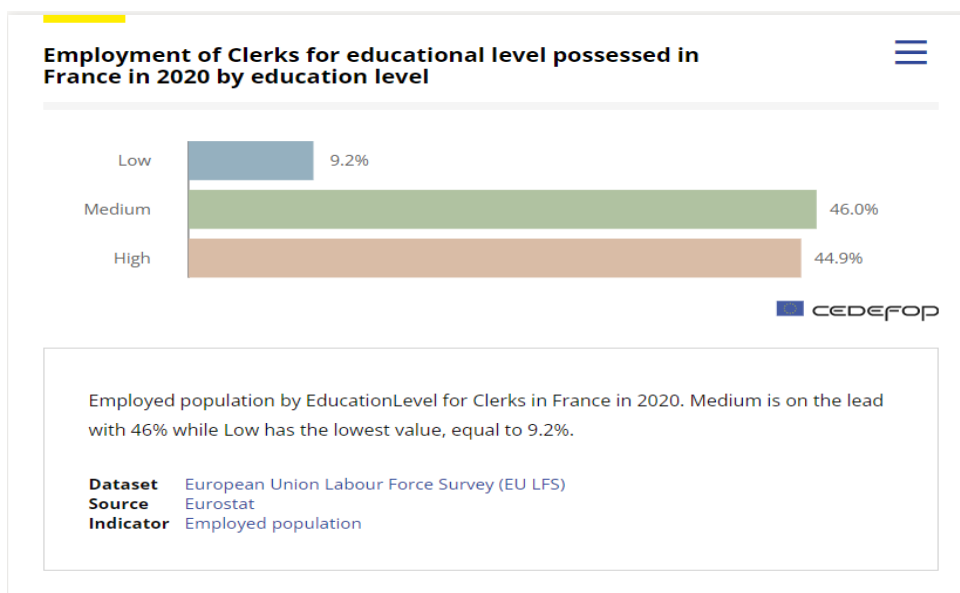
**Figure 14: Employed population by age for Clerks in Finland in 2020**

**Figure 15: Employed population by Educational level for Office Clerks in Finland in 2020**

**Figure 16: Employed population by age for Office Clerks in Finland in 2020**


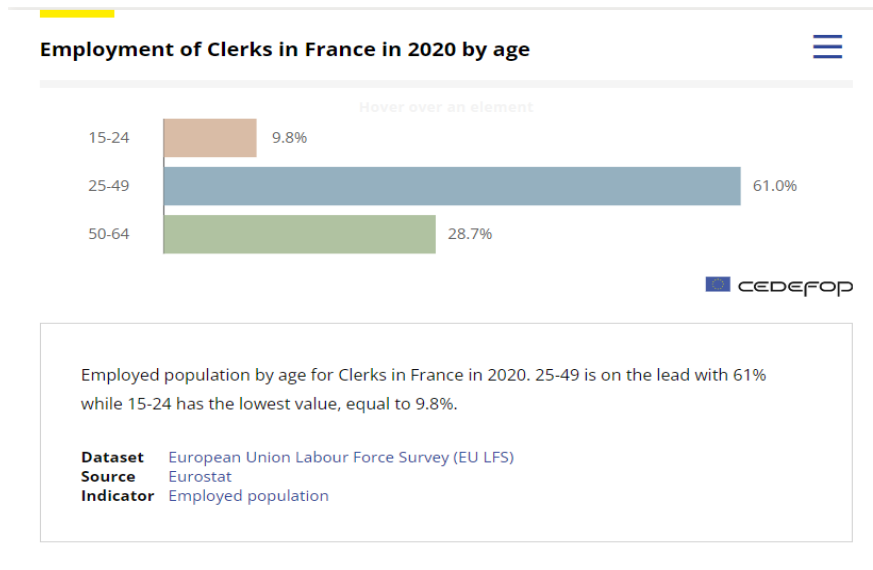
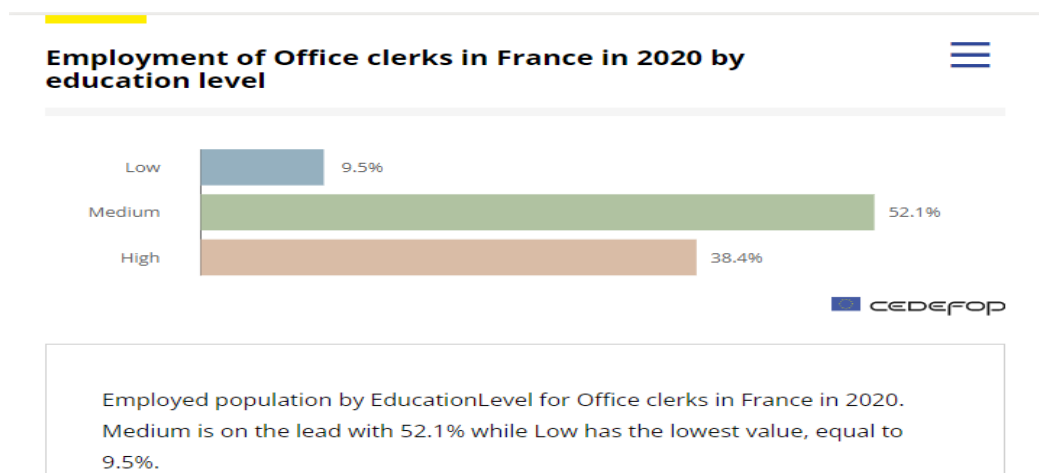
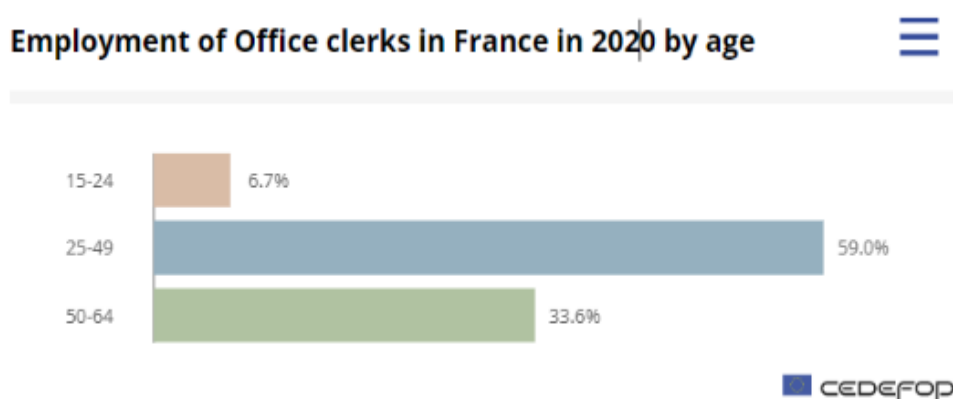
### 1.5.2.3 France

France is the second largest EU economy. Three sectors dominate its employment: health & social care, wholesale & retail trade and manufacturing. Some leading global companies have their headquarters in France. The country's labor market faces some challenges in recent years. Unemployment rate remains above EU average and the employment growth was mediocre. **France is expected to perform better in forthcoming years, with stronger growth of both employment and working age population (15-64).**

**ICT services should lead the employment growth over the period to 2030, followed by accommodation & food sector and health & social care.** The occupational forecast shows clear signs of job polarization. Although high-skilled occupations, such as researchers & engineers or legal & social professionals will be creating more new jobs, **the fastest growing occupation will be cleaners & helpers, followed by sales workers.**

**Figure 17: Employed population by Educational level for Clerks in France in 2020**



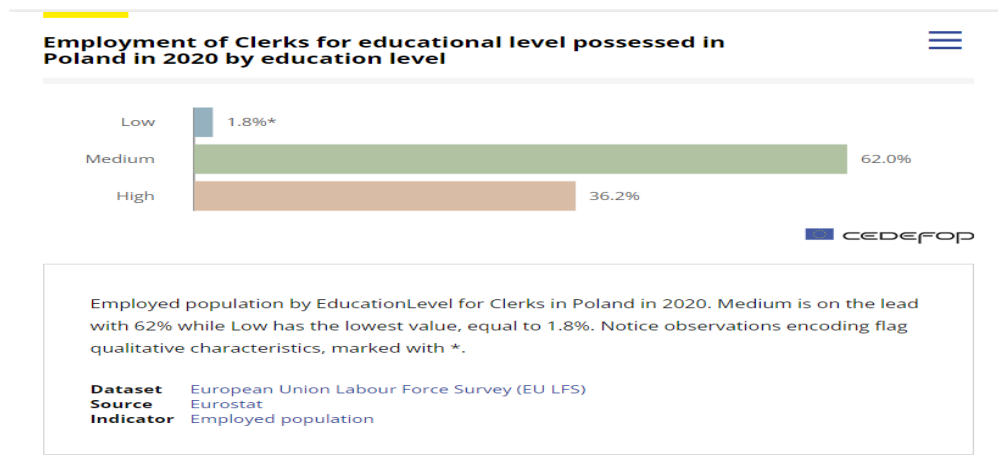
**Figure 18: Employed population by age for Clerks in France in 2020**

**Figure 19: Employed population by Educational level for Office Clerks in France in 2020**

**Figure 20: Employed population by age for Office Clerks in France in 2020**


### 1.5.2.4 Poland

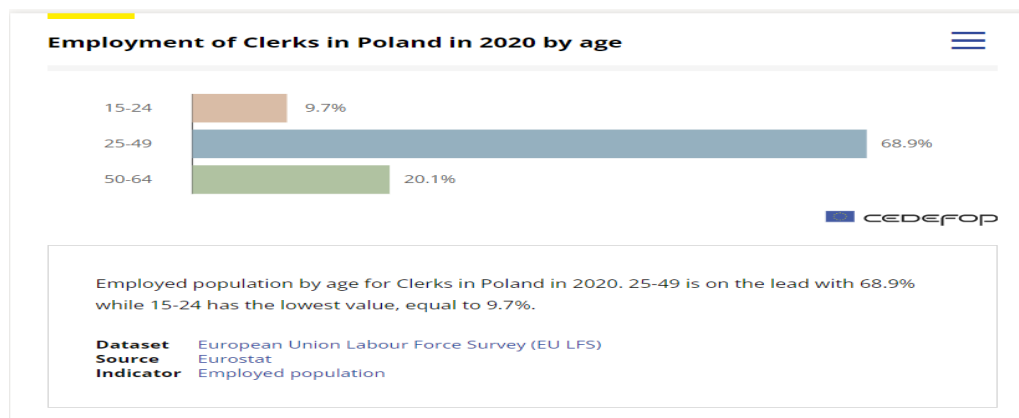
In Poland economy and employment grew decently in last years and the unemployment rate has dropped significantly. However, **an employment decline is forecasted over the period to 2030**. The country still provides plenty of employment opportunities in agriculture and manufacturing. Industrial activities include shipbuilding and the production of fertilisers and petrochemicals, machine tools, electrical machinery, electronics, and cars.

**It is the service sector which is expected to continue growing in the future, though – especially in accomodation & food, health & social care and administrative services.** Among the occupations with most new job openings there will be legal & social associate professionals, health professionals, but also business managers or researchers & engineers. **Poland, as well as other EU countries, faces an ageing challenge that will impact the total demand for jobs. An overwhelming majority of total job openings (including replacements for vacated jobs) till 2030 will require high qualifications.**

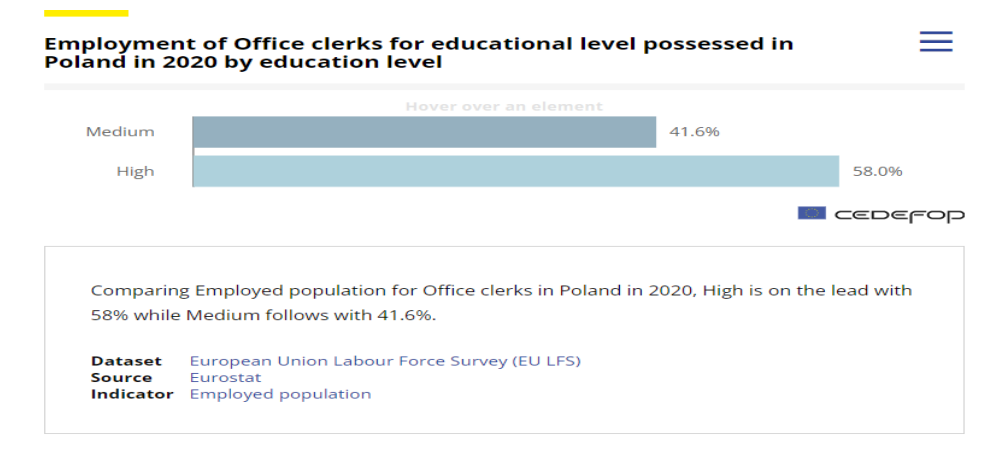
**Figure 21: Employed population by Educational level for Clerks in Poland in 2020**



**Figure 22: Employed population by age for Clerks in Poland in 2020**



**Figure 23: Employed population by Educational level for Office Clerks in Poland in 2020**



**Figure 24: Employed population by age for Office Clerks in Poland in 2020**

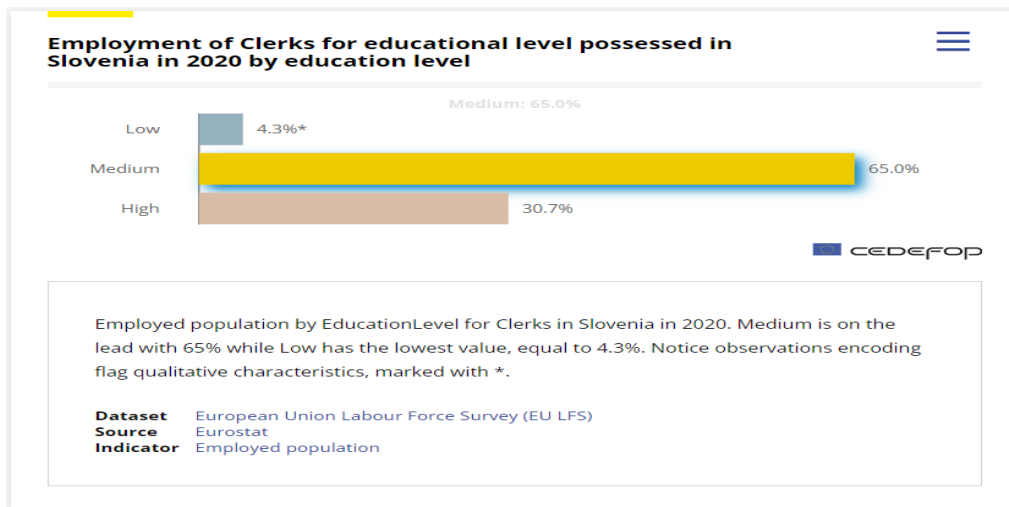
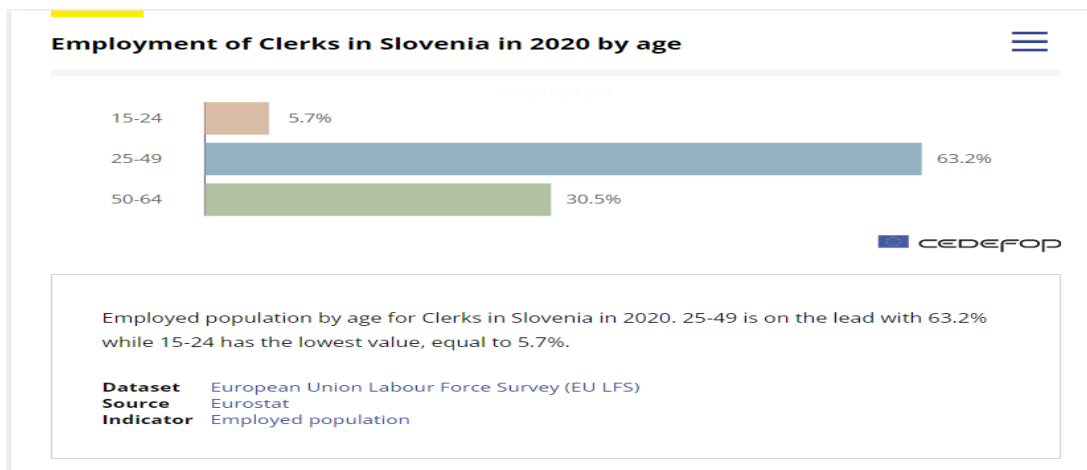
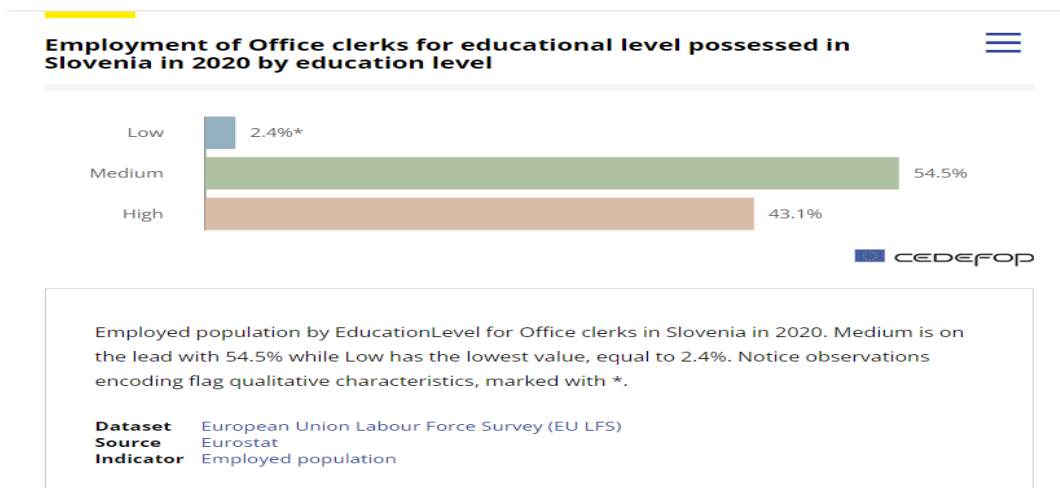


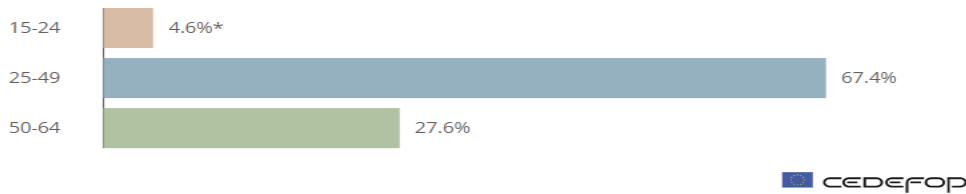
### 1.5.2.5 Slovenia

Since the financial crisis in 2008, **Slovenian** economy has experienced periods of growth and decline. **During the last five years the country's economic growth surpassed that of the EU and Slovenia' unemployment fell to just 5%. Further improvement is expected over the period to 2030. Employment shall increase, driven by ICT and professional services, but also by health care and construction.**

The occupations expected to have most new job openings are researchers & engineers, technical labourers and office associate professionals. **Overall, almost 9 out of 10 job openings will require medium or high level qualifications.**



**Figure 25: Employed population by Educational level for Clerks in Slovenia in 2020**

**Figure 26: Employed population by age for Clerks in Slovenia in 2020**

**Figure 27: Employed population by Educational level for Office Clerks in Slovenia in 2020**


**Figure 28: Employed population by age for Office Clerks in Slovenia in 2020**
**Employment of Office clerks in Slovenia in 2020 by age**


Employed population by age for Office clerks in Slovenia in 2020. 25-49 is on the lead with 67.4% while 15-24 has the lowest value, equal to 4.6%. Notice observations encoding flag qualitative characteristics, marked with \*.

**Dataset** European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS)  
**Source** Eurostat  
**Indicator** Employed population

## 1.6. Smart working

### 1.6.1. General findings

In **France** the use of smart working technics is more common among employees aged 30-49 than among older employees (50 years or older) or those under 30, where the proportion of managers and executives is lower. In quantitative terms the frequency of teleworking at least one day a week in 2017 by women was 20,4%, by men 23,0%, of people 50+ it was 20,9%.

In **Poland** 40% of Poles worked fully and 21% partially remotely in 2021. The remote organisation of work has appealed to a wide group of professionally active Poles. There are no separate data for the age of 50+.

In Slovenia before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic this type of work was not common, regardless of the fact that in Slovenia ICT enabling teleworking has been widely accessible for many years. In 2021, 217.428 workers were registered to work from home in Slovenia, which is more than 100 times more than before the epidemic. In 2019, only 2.037 workers were registered to work at home. No specific data on senior employees working from home were found.

We do not have relevant data for Belgium.

**Due to the rapid spread of the omikron version of the coronavirus, an increase in remote work can be expected in the future and we believe that all age groups of employed will be involved.**

### 1.6.1.1 BELGIUM

New results of the Labour Force Survey in Belgium: Statbel, the Belgian statistical office, published recently the results of the Labour Force Survey for 2021. After Belgium was able to limit the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the labour market in 2020 thanks to various support measures, such as the temporary unemployment scheme and the bridging right for the self-employed, there is a clear recovery in employment in 2021. The number of people employed increased by 51,000 persons between 2020 and 2021. If the former international definitions had still applied, this would even mean an increase of 91,000 persons. In this publication with the annual figures from the Labour Force Survey, a closer look at some key labour market indicators was taken.

### 1.6.1.2 FINLAND

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the working life in Finland has taken a significant digital leap. In many sectors employees started working from home at the beginning of the pandemic, and this was also seen in sectors such as education where teleworking was not considered possible in the pre-pandemic time. According to the report Finland (<https://euagenda.eu/upload/publications/wpof21014.pdf>): Working life in the COVID-19 pandemic 2020, in March 94% of the respondents worked at least four days a week from home, and the total percentage of employees who worked from home increased from 45% to 63% between March 2020 and October 2020. In 2021 14% of employees worked fully from home and 11% at least half of their working hours. The nationwide recommendation to work from home when possible ended on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. However, two years of teleworking has led to cultural changes at many workplaces.

The fast change from offices into teleworking was enabled by the already high digital skills of the employees and a working culture that is based on trust between the employer and the employees. The Finns were also following the national regulations to work from home in order to limit the spread of the virus. Teleworking forced by the pandemic showed that the employees work conscientiously from home and everything worked smoothly remotely, which resulted in more positive attitudes towards teleworking (<https://www.sttinfo.fi/tiedote/tyo2030-ohjelma-meadow-tutkimus-selvitti-miten-tyona-ntajat-suhtautuvat-etatyohon-pandemian-jalkeen?publisherId=69819041&releaseId=69939524>).

### 1.6.1.3. FRANCE

Regarding smart working, teleworking has not been compulsory since the beginning of February 2022, the utilization of teleworking is decreased significantly that month: 24 % of employees teleworked at least one day in February, compared to 29% the previous month. 44% of companies report difficulties in setting up or organizing telework, especially in organizing the balance with face-to-face work. The most common view of companies is that telework would allow their employees to better reconcile personal and professional life, 27% of companies, most employees aspire to telework more. Thus, the use of smart working technics is more common among employees aged 30-49 than among older employees (50 years or older) or those under 30, where the proportion of managers and executives is lower. But even among management positions, the youngest employees are the least likely to

telework. In quantitative terms the frequency of teleworking at least one day a week in 2017 by women was 20,4%, by men 23,0%, of people 50+ it was 20,9%.

#### 1.6.1.4 POLAND

According to the report “Work in the era of coronavirus”<sup>12</sup> prepared by pracuj.pl, in the spring and summer months of the passing year (2021), 40% of Poles worked fully and 21% partially remotely. And although this form of cooperation was initially problematic for both the managerial staff and the employees themselves, it is:

- 11% of the latter group would like to be able to work in this system full-time,
- 44% would like to be able to come to the office once a week,
- and 39% would like to be able to work remotely several days a month.

As you can see, the remote cooperation system has appealed to a wide group of professionally active Poles. There are no separate data for the age of 50+.

#### 1.6.1.5 SLOVENIA

An employment contract for home (tele, remote) working has existed in Slovenian labour legislation for over 50 years, but such contracts had hitherto only rarely been concluded. This shifted *overnight* with the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic this type of work was not common, regardless of the fact that in Slovenia ICT enabling teleworking has been widely accessible for many years. A temporary solution during the covid-19 epidemic has become a new reality, it is poorly regulated by law and, above all, there is no real control over it. The legislation on labor relations will also have to be adapted to the new conditions on the labor market.

Covid-19 has had a major impact on work processes. Due to the rapid spread of the omikron version of the coronavirus, an increase in remote work can also be expected in the future. In 2021, 217.428 workers were registered to work from home in Slovenia, which is more than 100 times more than before the epidemic. In 2019, only 2.037 workers were registered to work at home. No specific data on senior employees working from home were found. (<https://www.rtv.slo.si/gospodarstvo/od-doma-dela-vec-kot-100-krat-vec-zaposlenih-kot-pred-epidemijo/607926>)

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<sup>12</sup> *Praca w dobie koronawirusa.* (2020), Pracuj.pl - [https://prowly-uploads.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/uploads/landing\\_page\\_image/image/266145/ea2b4dbe108849e69e7b7cf0eb486119.pdf](https://prowly-uploads.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/uploads/landing_page_image/image/266145/ea2b4dbe108849e69e7b7cf0eb486119.pdf)

## 2. DIGITAL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK AND AGEING WORKFORCE (IDENTIFICATION OF COMPETENCE GAPS)

### 2.1. DigComp Framework

**The European Digital Competence Framework** for Citizens<sup>1</sup>, also known as DigComp, offers a tool to improve citizens' digital competences. DigComp was developed at the Joint Research Center (JRC) as scientific project with the help of intensive consulting of stakeholders, first on behalf of the General Directorate for Education and Culture (DG EAC), and later on behalf of the Directorate General for Employment (DG EMPL). Since its first release in 2013, DigComp has become a reference for development and strategic planning of digital competence initiatives at European level and member states. In June 2016, SRS released DigComp 2.0, in which it updated terminology and conceptual model and showed implementation examples on European, national and regional levels.

The current version is called DigComp 2.1 and focuses on expansion of the original three levels to more detailed descriptions of the eight levels and provides examples used for all eight levels. Its goal is to support stakeholders in the further implementation of DigComp.

Other related works of SRS on capacity building for digital transformation education and learning and to change skills requirements and competencies focused on the development of:

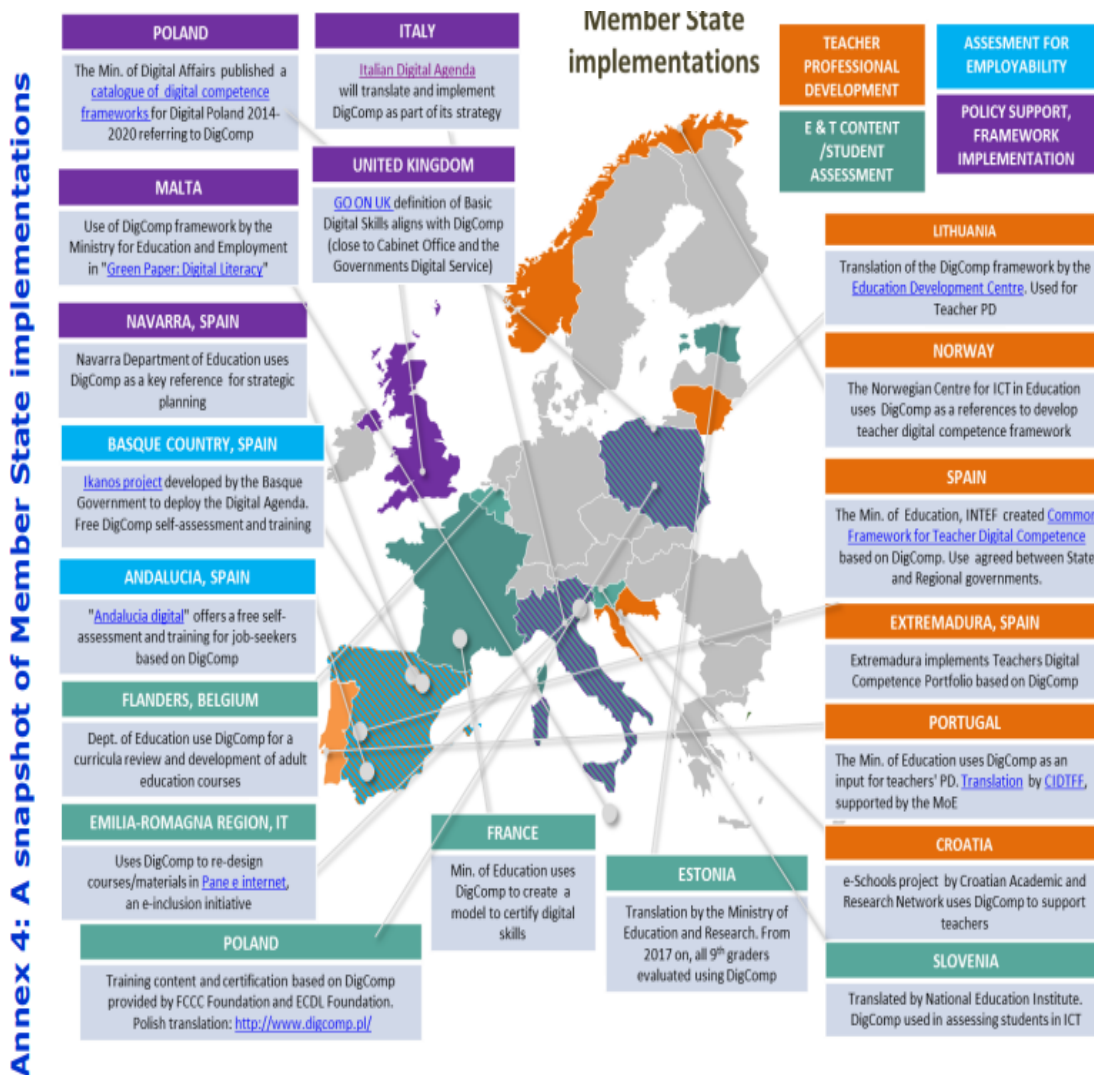
- digital competence frameworks for educators (DigCompEdu),
- educational institutions (DigCompOrg),
- users (DigCompConsumers).

In 2016, a framework for greater openness of higher education institutions was also issued (OpenEdu) and the Competence Framework for Entrepreneurship (EntreComp).

The European Commission's Digital Compass set the goal of reaching 80% in digital literacy among EU citizens aged 16 to 74 by 2030.

## 2.1.1 General findings

Figure 29: A snapshot of member states implementations (2016)



[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303960042\\_DigComp\\_20\\_The\\_Digital\\_Competence\\_Framework\\_for\\_Citizens\\_Update\\_Phase\\_1\\_the\\_Conceptual\\_Reference\\_Model](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303960042_DigComp_20_The_Digital_Competence_Framework_for_Citizens_Update_Phase_1_the_Conceptual_Reference_Model)

In **Belgium** based on digital action plan, **Digital Belgium**, the government will work to improve digital skills, with a view to closing the digital divide in the country. **Department of education use DigComp for a curricula review and development of adult education courses.**

**France** launched a large investment plan to enhance basic digital skills in the country 12/11/2018. A €15 billion investment plan to fund training courses for up to 2 million people has been announced by the French Government. The Plan Investissement Competences (PIC) will run until 2022. Additionally, 2020 saw 16,000 new candidates (lacking digital skills)

register for ICDL certification (04/05/2021). **Ministry of education uses DigComp to create a model to certify digital skills.**

**In Poland the Ministry of Digital affairs published a catalogue of digital competences framework for Poland 2014-2020, referring to DigComp.** Training content and certification based on DigComp is provided by FCCC Foundation and ECDL Foundation. Due to the specific situation in **Poland**, regarding the consequences of Ukrainian war crisis and integration of refugees into the education system they do not have **data based on DigComp framework.**

Digital skills of **Slovenians** are quite developed, shows an analysis by the national Statistics Office. Digital literacy is lowest among the elderly (65 to 74) and the unemployed. The country is still lacking in digital and data literacy and using ICT compared to the rest of the EU. The percentage of the unemployed with highly-developed digital competences was below the EU average, 17 % compared to 22%. The digital and data literacy in Slovenia is at 85%, with 15% having no such skills, which is above the EU average. Digital skills for communication and cooperation are well in the EU average at 86% and competences for producing digital content were at 66%, coinciding with the EU average. Proficiency in safely using ICT and in data protection in Slovenia did not meet the EU average (59% compared to 68%) and problem-solving digital skills slightly exceeded the average, at 81% compared to 79%. **In Slovenia DigComp framework was translated by National education institute. DigComp is used in assessing students in ICT.**

**DigComp framework is present in all partner countries, but at different levels. It has become a reference for development and strategic planning of digital competence initiatives at European level and as well in member states, thus in all project partner countries.**

## 2.1.2. DigComp Framework per partner country

### 2.1.2.1 BELGIUM

**Belgium announces refreshed digital Belgium plan to boost digital skills and services<sup>13</sup> (03/11/2020).** The Belgian Government has included strengthening digital skills in its recently adopted government agreement. The agreement sets out the priorities of the federal government during its term in office. As part of its digital action plan, **Digital Belgium**, the government will work to improve digital skills, with a view to closing the digital divide in the country.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://icdleurope.org/belgium-announces-refreshed-digital-belgium-plan-to-boost-digital-skills-and-services/>

ICDL Europe, which operates the ICDL programme in Belgium, engaged with the previous Digital Belgium action plan, and we look forward to working with partners to help boost digital skills across Belgium under the new plan. Alongside action to tackle digital skills shortages, the new plan will include an improvement of the government's digital services such as e-health, mobile health, and e-justice. Other actions will seek to strengthen the tech ecosystem and develop a federal data strategy to use big data for public objectives like mobility and health.

### 2.1.2.2 FINLAND

According to Digital Economy and Society Index 2022 (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi-the-2022-report>), Finland is among the EU frontrunners in the digital skills of its citizens. Approximately 79% of Finns have at least basic digital skills, which is high above the average EU level of 54%. However, the older a person is, the lower the digital competence is, but only 1% in the age group 55-74 had no overall digital skills. On the other hand, 27% of the same age group had above basic digital skills. According to a report (will be published in Dec 2022) by Digital and Population Data Services Agency, a majority of 50+ citizens feel that they cannot keep up with the rate of digital development. The older they become, the less competent they feel about their digital skills, and predict that they will not be able to follow the digital transition. The need for assistance increases with age and simultaneously, the will and courage to learn new skills independently decreases and they wish to be able to learn digital skills when assisted by someone they know.

Digital skills are recognised as highly important in government policy, and the need for their development frequently stands out in the programme for continuous learning (<https://okm.fi/digipalvelut-ja-ohjelma>). However, as the digital skills of Finns already are on a very high level, there is no need for a national programme as it is seen that the system already serves its purpose. Instead, the Ministry of Education and Culture has launched a programme of continuous learning in digital skills, and as a part of the programme, the improvement of digital skills has been built in the curricula of all levels of education. As an example, Finland launched a national media education policy in 2019 to promote, support, research and practice media literacy and media education in Finland. Moreover, the programme covers all tertiary education in strengthening digitalisation and flexible learning (Digivisio 2030).

All in all, it has been recognised that there is a knowledge and skills gap among certain groups, including, for example, the ageing workforce, young people and immigrants. The labour market training aims at reaching especially those, who are in need of further training. Furthermore, it is set in the Recovery and Resilience Plan to support the digital transitions of those with low digital skills to match with the needs of the labour markets. At least 7800 people will take part in the training programmes and the plan also aims at improving the overall level of education by creating more tertiary level study places ([https://ec.europa.eu/info/system/files/2022-european-semester-country-report-finland\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/system/files/2022-european-semester-country-report-finland_en.pdf)).



### 2.1.2.3 FRANCE

**France launched a large investment plan to enhance basic digital skills in the country 12/11/2018.** A €15 billion investment plan to fund training courses for up to 2 million people has been announced by the French Government. **The Plan Investissement Competences (PIC) will run until 2022.** Already in force during the last quarter of 2018, this huge investment plan offers training programs to people who encounter difficulties on the French employment market and is also designed to facilitate better social inclusion. Aiming to improve basic skills of both young people with no diploma or professional qualifications or living in big cities suburbs, and job seekers and handicapped persons, PIC represents a massive effort to tackle issue of training in France, improve basic computing skills.

**Additionally, 2020 saw 16,000 new candidates register for ICDL certification in France 04/05/2021.** Among them, a wide variety of profiles (employees, job seekers, self-employed ...) and objectives, but above all a common point: that of having met the challenge of digital skills. Digital skills are essential for many workers facing changes in the labor market and are also sought after by all generations. Beyond any clichés of digital skills being limited to the mastery of social networks among the youngest or the use of video conferencing so that seniors can keep in touch with their grandchildren, the testimonies of candidates give us a broader picture. ICDL France interviewed both the youngest and oldest candidates for ICDL certification.

### 2.1.2.4 POLAND

The Polish Ministry of Development, as a body granting support under the Investment Priority of the European Social Fund 2014-2020 (ESF), concerning, inter alia, improving the competences of adults in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and foreign languages, referred to the shortage of digital competences necessary on the labor market in the European Union, including Poland, issued "Guidelines for the implementation of projects with the participation of the European Social Fund in the field of education for the years 2014-2020"<sup>14</sup>. The current version of the "Guidelines ..." was released in January 2018, This document contains the "Standard of requirements for digital competences implemented under projects under Investment Priority 10 (iii)", based on the DIGCOMP v1.0 framework.

On April 27, 2022, the Minister of Funds and Regional Policy informed<sup>15</sup> about the partial suspension of the application of the guidelines of the Minister of Investment and Development in the implementation of projects with the participation of the European Social Fund in the field of education for 2014-2020 of September 11, 2019.

The partial suspension of the Guidelines is intended to adjust the intervention undertaken with the participation of the European Social Fund in the area of education to the conditions resulting from the COVID-19 epidemic and the effects of the armed aggression of the Russian

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<sup>14</sup> Wytyczne w zakresie realizacji przedsięwzięć z udziałem środków Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego w obszarze edukacji na lata 2014-2020 (2019) Ministry of Development (pages 44-46) [https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/media/78631/Wytyczne\\_educacji\\_-\\_11\\_wrzesnia\\_2019\\_r.pdf](https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/media/78631/Wytyczne_educacji_-_11_wrzesnia_2019_r.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/media/108164/Komunikat\\_educacja.pdf](https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/media/108164/Komunikat_educacja.pdf)

Federation against Ukraine. The suspension of certain provisions on the implementation of projects in the area of pre-school education is aimed at enabling an appropriate response to the emerging needs in the field of pre-school education for children who were forced to leave Ukraine due to the armed conflict in this country, often specific to this group of people. The suspension of the provision on the involvement of parents in activities aimed at students with special development and educational needs is to enable support for children from Ukraine, although contact with their parents, mainly due to the language barrier or absence in Poland, may be difficult or impossible. The suspension of the entire chapter 5 should allow the launch of the full range of support in the development of skills and competences of adults who took refuge in Poland before the war in Ukraine.

Period of suspension: until December 31, 2023.

Therefore, we do not have any data based on DigComp framework in Poland, because they have not been published yet.

#### 2.1.2.5 SLOVENIA

Digital skills of Slovenians are quite developed, shows an analysis by the national Statistics Office. Digital literacy is lowest among the elderly (65 to 74) and the unemployed. The country is still lacking in digital and data literacy and using ICT compared to the rest of the EU. Last year (2021), a fifth of Slovenians aged 16 to 74 had very well-developed digital skills. About 14% had no digital skills at all, with the percentage being at 45 in the 65-74 age group. The European Commission's Digital Compass set the goal of reaching 80% in digital literacy among EU citizens aged 16 to 74 by 2030. Slovenia currently reaches 50%, 4% below the EU average. Digital literacy and competences are most developed in the 16-24 age group (63%) and least developed in the 65-74 cohort (19%). Among the employed in Slovenia, over a third (34%) had basic digital skills (3% below the EU average), and less than a quarter (24%) had highly-developed digital competences (8% below the EU average). Nearly 6% had no digital competences whatsoever, which coincides with the EU average. Some 13 % of the unemployed population had no such skills (below EU average by 3%). However the percentage of the unemployed with highly-developed digital competences was also below the EU average, 17 % compared to 22%. The digital and data literacy in Slovenia is at 85%, with 15% having no such skills, which is above the EU average. Digital skills for communication and cooperation are well in the EU average at 86% and competences for producing digital content were at 66%, coinciding with the EU average as well. Proficiency in safely using ICT and in data protection in Slovenia did not meet the EU average (59% compared to 68%) and problem-solving digital skills slightly exceeded the average, at 81% compared to 79%. (<https://sloveniatimes.com/a-fifth-of-slovenians-have-well-developed-digital-competences/>)

## 2.2. Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable development<sup>16</sup> is a development approach which aims to meet the needs of present generations without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development represents a lever for innovation, and an opportunity to reassess our economic model, to ensure that our societies, the planet and our economy have a sustainable future. The Agenda 2030 for sustainable development was adopted by 195 countries at the United Nations General Assembly in 2015. It includes 17 goals that incorporate the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

This first universal approach provides a new framework for development policies for the next 15 years. It builds on the eight Millennium Development Goals implemented since 2000, which have contributed to real progress with tackling hunger, poverty, and child mortality, rolling back pandemics, and improving access to water and education.

### 2.2.1 General findings

The monitoring and implementation of the 17 sustainable development goals in partner countries falls under the responsibility of various public authorities.

**Belgium's** advocacy for gender equality, conflict prevention and digital for development is effective and well-recognised. Belgium is noted for putting one of its flagship thematic priorities on the European agenda: digital for development.

**Finland** ranks first in international comparison of sustainable development. Of the 17 goals, especially those related to social sustainability have been achieved or are close to being achieved. Finland has achieved its goals in poverty reduction, clean and affordable energy, and high-quality education. Finland still has work to do, especially to achieve several goals in ecological sustainability to be able to better fight climate change.

**France** has achieved a high standard of living and quality of life driven by inclusive social security systems (unemployment benefits, supplementary benefits and redistributive policy) and access for all to healthcare and basic goods and services (water, energy, quality food and education). Still work has to be done, especially to reduce social, educational and gender inequalities, maintain healthy ecosystems and sustainably manage natural resources.

In **Poland** they keep Official SDG Statistics - Indicators for Global Goals.

In **Slovenia**, for several years now the structure of enrolment in secondary and tertiary education has been changing to meet labour market needs, although in a period of high demand for labour Slovenia faced a shortage of labour with the required skills. Despite

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<sup>16</sup> [https://www.belgium.be/en/economy/sustainable\\_development/sustainable\\_development](https://www.belgium.be/en/economy/sustainable_development/sustainable_development)

Slovenia's favourable position in several areas, challenges in certain areas of education and lifelong learning still need to be addressed

Observing the **SDG Index** which measures the total progress towards achieving all 17 SDGs as a percentage of SDG achievement for all partner countries we can see that they **are all ranked very highly among all 163 countries**, from the rank 1 (Finland, achieving 86,5% of the total progress), rank 7 (France, achieving 81,2% of the total progress), rank 12 (Poland, achieving 80,5% of the total progress), rank 15 (Slovenia, achieving 80% of the total progress) and rank 18 (Belgium, achieving 79,7% of the total progress).

Regarding the **spillover index**, which assesses spillovers along three dimensions: environmental and social impacts embodied into trade, economy and finance, and security (a higher score means that a country causes more positive and fewer negative spillover effects), Poland with a score of 80,9% is positioned the best between all the partner countries, followed by Finland (73,5%), Slovenia (60,9%), France (57,8%) and Belgium the worst (54%). The results differ significantly between the partner countries.

**Table 11 SDG achievements of partner countries (2022)**

Belgium is ranked 18/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 79,7 % SDG Index and has a 54,0% spillover score.
Finland is ranked 1/163, has a country score of 86,5% and has a 73,6% spillover rate.
France in ranked 7/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 81.2 % SDG Index and has a 57.8% spillover score.
Poland is ranked 12/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 80,5 % SDG Index and has a 80,9% spillover score.
Slovenia is ranked 15/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 80,0 % SDG Index and has a 60,9% spillover score.

**Relevant SDGs for our project is SDG 4 (equal education) and 8 (decent work and economic growth).**

***SDG4 – “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. SDG 4 aims to provide global access to quality education for boys and for girls, from primary education to university in rural or urban areas”.***

**Table 12: SDG 4 (quality education) achievement in all partner countries**

Dimension	BE		FIN		FR		POL		SLO	
Participation rate in pre-primary organised learning (% of children aged 4-6)	96,2	↑	98,8	↑	99,9	↑	98,8	↑	91,6	↑
Net primary enrolment rate (%)	99,1	↑	98,1	↑	100,0	↑	98,9	↑	99,9	↑
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	92,5	↑	101,2		99,5	↑	103,3	↑	96,2	↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15-24)	Na		-		Na	-	99,8		99,8	
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25-34)	48,5	↑	44,7	↑	49,4	↑	42,4	↑	45,4	↑
PISA score (worst 0-600 best)	500	↑	516,3	↑	493,7	↑	513,0	↑	503,7	↑
Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%)	20,0	↓	10,5	↑	20,1	→	12,6	↑	13,0	/
Underachievers in science (% of 15 years old)	20,0	↓	12,9	↑	20,5	↑	13,8	↑	14,6	↑

**Looking at the SDG 4 dimensions on a general level we see that all** (Participation rate in pre-primary organised learning (% of children aged 4-6), Net primary enrolment rate (%), Lower secondary completion rate (%), Literacy rate (% of population aged 15-24), Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25-34), PISA score (worst 0-600 best)) **but** Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%) and Underachievers in science (% of 15 years old) **are achieved and are on track or maintaining SDG achievements in all partner countries. In Belgium Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%) is presenting significant challenges and the indicator is decreasing; in France it is as well presenting significant challenges, major challenges remain or are stagnating; in Slovenia as well challenges remain but a**

**moderate improvement of this indicator is observed; Finland and Poland are on good track with this SDG 4 dimension.**

**Looking at Underachievers in science (% of 15 years old) in Belgium they face challenges and decreasing of the value, in France they face challenges as well, but the achievements are on track or maintained. All other partner countries' achievements are for these two dimension achieved and on track.**

We can say, that society that promotes accessible, quality and effective lifelong learning is on the right track. Acquiring new knowledge and developing skills throughout life is crucial in creating conditions for quality life and work and for a healthy and active lifestyle.

In today's society knowledge quickly becomes obsolete due to technological advances, which, in turn, hinders successfully coping with the changes in the workplace, especially automation, lower incomes and more difficult integration into society. In order to make it easier for adults to meet the challenges of sustainable development, while maintaining high accessibility to education for young people, efforts should be made to strengthen adult participation in learning, paying special attention to measures for low-educated and other vulnerable adult groups

**SDG 8: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.**

Tens of millions of people worldwide still do not have access to employment. Sustainable, inclusive, sustained economic growth based on decent work for all will help improve mankind's living conditions.

Looking at the SDG 8 dimension at the general level we can conclude that in all partner countries all (Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile money service provider (% of population aged 15 or over); fundamental labour rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0 – to best 1); fatal work related accidents embodied in imports (per 100000 population); employment to population ratio (%); youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 – 29) **are achieved and are on track or maintaining SDG achievements in all partner countries. In France youth not in employment, education or training dimension is still presenting challenges but on the way of improvement. In Poland the fundamental labour rights are presenting a significant challenge.**

In Finland in recent years the annual GDP growth has been around 2% while unemployment has been decreasing. Less than 8% of young people are not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The percentage will improve with the new legislation for compulsory education. Total material consumption has not been decreasing even though the consumption in relation to GDP has been decreasing.

The average hourly earnings have risen steadily for both sexes. However, for men the level of earnings has been, and still is, higher than that of women.

Overall, the working environments are safe and secure for all workers.

France is supporting the EU Aid for Trade Strategy, a pillar for development. Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) seek to foster dialogue and cooperation in the economic and trade fields with ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries. Certain populations, such as young people, remain particularly vulnerable to the scourge of unemployment. France promotes training suited to the jobs market in order to support strong, sustainable and inclusive growth and to foster young people's access to decent jobs via the 2017-2021 education, vocational training and integration strategies. The 2013-2017 Gender and Development strategy includes the goal of equal pay for equal work and girls' schooling. This strategy will be renewed in 2017. SDG 8 lays the ground for the proportion of young people schooled and trained in a profession to have grown considerably by 2030, and for child labour to have disappeared.

Slovenia has been most effective in Goal 1 (eradicating extreme forms of poverty), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth) and Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). Full Year GDP Growth in Slovenia increased to 8.35 percent in 2021 from -4.33 percent in 2020. In 2020 there were 309,000 persons in Slovenia aged between 15 and 29 at the beginning of the year, more than half of whom were enrolled in education programmes. Just over 161,000 were employed. The efficient assurance of health and safety at work, with no accidents, occupational diseases or work-related diseases is therefore in both the national interest and the interest of workers and is an obligation of employers. The objective is a well-organised system of health and safety at work established at all levels, supplemented by programmes for the promotion of physical and mental health at work.

## Belgium

### SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Adjusted GDP growth (%)	-0.5 2020	●	●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	2.0 2018	●	●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	98.6 2017	●	↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.8 2020	●	↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	1.6 2015	●	↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	64.5 2020	●	↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	12.5 2020	●	↑

## Finland

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth		
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	-0.2	2020 ● ●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	1.7	2018 ● ●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	99.8	2017 ● ↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.9	2020 ● ↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.9	2015 ● ↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	71.2	2020 ● ↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	10.8	2020 ● ↑

## France

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth		
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	-0.6	2020 ● ●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	2.0	2018 ● ●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	94.0	2017 ● ↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.8	2020 ● ↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	1.7	2015 ● ↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	66.1	2020 ● ↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	15.0	2020 ● ↗

## Poland

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth		
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	1.5	2020 ● ●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	3.4	2018 ● ●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	86.7	2017 ● ↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.7	2020 ● ↓
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.4	2015 ● ↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	67.8	2020 ● ↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	13.5	2020 ● ↑

## Slovenia

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth		
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	0.2	2020 ● ●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	2.2	2018 ● ●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	97.5	2017 ● ↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.8	2020 ● ↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.9	2015 ● ↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	70.1	2020 ● ↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	9.1	2020 ● ↑



## 2.2.2. SDG per partner country

### 2.2.2.1 BELGIUM

The monitoring and implementation of the 17 sustainable development goals in Belgium falls under the responsibility of various public authorities. In Belgium, sustainable development is a matter for the federal state, regions, communities and municipalities. To implement a sustainable development policy, in Belgium they rely on:

- the law of 1997 (fr) laying down federal policy in the area of sustainable development;
- the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the Rio Summit;
- the opinion on the long-term vision for sustainable development 2050 (fr) from the Federal Council for Sustainable Development (FRDO).

Data from the OECD-report<sup>17</sup>:

Belgium's advocacy for gender equality, conflict prevention and digital for development is effective and well-recognised. Belgium is noted for putting one of its flagship thematic priorities on the European agenda: digital for development. Following its lead, 15 Member States called for an ambitious European strategy, which resulted in a working document drafted by the European Commission and the European Council adopting recommendations to support digital for development. Belgium spearheaded the creation of the Digital for Development-Hub (D4D) EU-Africa, an initiative anchored in the new Joint Africa-EU Strategy and which aims to support digital transformation efforts in Africa by building on common expertise and networks.

Enabel's work under this goal mainly focusses on the provision and improvement of technical and vocational education and training, as well as on quality improvement of basic and secondary education through teacher training, curriculum reform and the introduction of student-centred teaching methods. Enabel also supports the (re)construction of schools with a focus on student-friendly and green schools.

**Belgium is ranked 18/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 79,7 % SDG Index and has a 54,0% spillover score.**

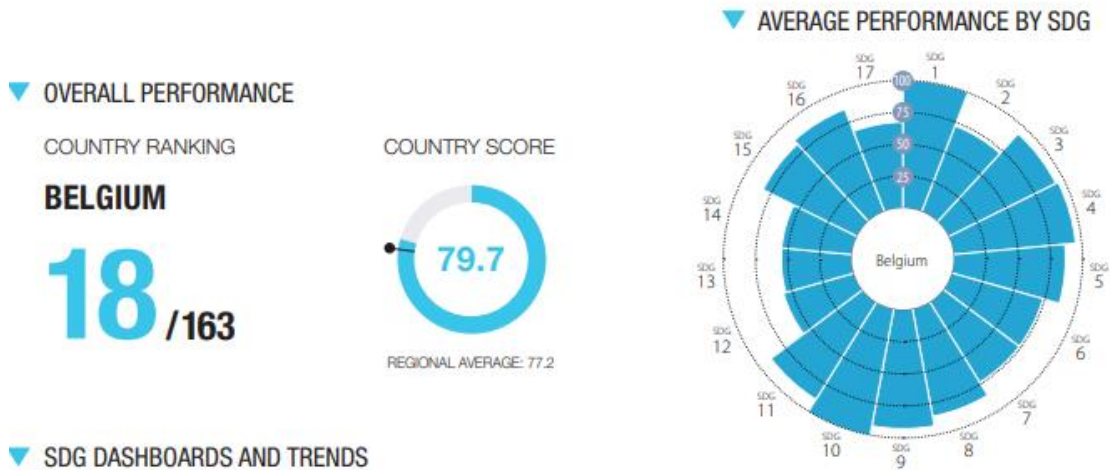
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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/35f0fae7-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/35f0fae7-en>

**Figure 30 Belgium's SDG-report 2021<sup>18</sup>**

# BELGIUM

OECD Countries



▼ **SDG DASHBOARDS AND TRENDS**

**Table 13: Belgium's detailed SDG4 – Quality Education report**

### SDG4 – Quality Education

Participation rate in pre-primary organized learning (% of children aged 4 to 6)	96.2	2019	●	↑
Net primary enrollment rate (%)	99.1	2019	●	↑
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	92.5	2019	●	↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 to 24)	NA	NA	●	●
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25 to 34)	48.5	2020	●	↑
PISA score (worst 0–600 best)	500.0	2018	●	↑
Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%)	20.0	2018	●	↓
Underachievers in science (% of 15-year-olds)	20.0	2018	●	↓

### Results for SDG Indicator 4.4.1 for Belgium

Proportion of youth/adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill:

- SDG Indicator 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, both sexes (%): Belgium: 38 (2011) and 45 (2016).
- SDG Indicator 4.4.1.a Proportion of youth and adults who have copied or moved a file or folder (%): Belgium: 71 (2016)

<sup>18</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/belgium>

- SDG Indicator 4.4.1.c Proportion of youth and adults who have created electronic presentations with presentation software (%): Belgium: 35 (2016)

## SDG 5

SDG5 – Gender Equality		
Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49)	NA NA	● ●
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%)	97.5 2019	● ↑
Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate (%)	84.4 2020	● ↑
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	41.3 2020	● ↑
Gender wage gap (% of male median wage)	3.8 2019	● ↑
SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth		
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	-0.5 2020	● ●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	2.0 2018	● ●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	98.6 2017	● ↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.8 2020	● ↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	1.6 2015	● ↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	64.5 2020	● ↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	12.5 2020	● ↑

### 2.2.2.2 FINLAND

Finland has been among the first to implement the 2030 Agenda, and it strongly supports the implementation of the goals and is committed to reaching the goals at home and in its international cooperation. As the main priorities Finland strives to enhance the rights and position of women and girls, and strengthen democracy and good governance. Since Finland was less affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, it tops many other European countries in SDG challenges. Finland also ranked first in the global SDG index while also ranking first in the World Happiness Report in 2021.

Finland raised the minimum school leaving age to 18 years starting in stages in autumn 2021, and within the context of compulsory education, upper secondary level education was made totally free of charge. Pre-school was also made compulsory in 2015, and in 2019 the participation rate in pre-primary organized education is over 98%. Finland has high percentages in both literacy and numeracy skills.

**Finland is ranked 1/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 86.5 % SDG Index and has a 73.6% spillover score.**

**Figure 31: Finland's SDG-report 2021<sup>19</sup>**

# FINLAND

OECD Countries

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

COUNTRY RANKING

**FINLAND**

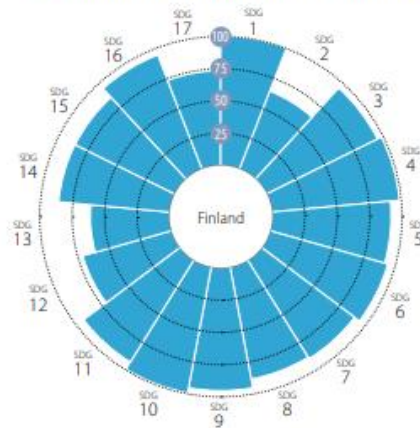
**1** /163

COUNTRY SCORE



REGIONAL AVERAGE: 77.2

## AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BY SDG



## SDG DASHBOARDS AND TRENDS

**Table 14: Finland's detailed SDG4 – Quality Education report**

SDG4 – Quality Education			
Participation rate in pre-primary organized learning (% of children aged 4 to 6)	98.8	2019	● ↑
Net primary enrollment rate (%)	98.1	2019	● ↑
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	101.2	2019	● ↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 to 24)	NA	NA	● ●
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25 to 34)	44.7	2020	● ↑
PISA score (worst 0–600 best)	516.3	2018	● ↑
Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%)	10.5	2018	● ↑
Underachievers in science (% of 15-year-olds)	12.9	2018	● ↑

## Results for SDG Indicator 4.4.1 for Finland

Proportion of youth/adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill:

- SDG Indicator 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, both sexes (%): Finland: 55.7 (2011) and 54.1 (2016).
- SDG Indicator 4.4.1.a Proportion of youth and adults who have copied or moved a file or folder (%): Finland: 69 (2016)
- SDG Indicator 4.4.1.c Proportion of youth and adults who have created electronic presentations with presentation software (%): Finland: 45 (2016)

<sup>19</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/belgium>

## Results for SDG Indicator 5 in Finland

In Finland the legislation guarantees equal rights to both sexes. Even though the proportion of women holding seats in the parliament is relatively high, 46% after the elections held in 2019, women still spend more time on domestic and care work [https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162268/VNK\\_2020\\_8\\_Annex\\_1\\_Statistics\\_Finland.pdf?sequence=11&isAllowed=y](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162268/VNK_2020_8_Annex_1_Statistics_Finland.pdf?sequence=11&isAllowed=y).

### SDG5 – Gender Equality

Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49)	* 90.2	2022	●	↑
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%)	103.2	2019	●	↑
Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate (%)	87.7	2020	●	↑
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	46.0	2020	●	↑
Gender wage gap (% of male median wage)	17.2	2019	●	→

## Results for SDG Indicator 8 in Finland

In recent years the annual GDP growth has been around 2% while unemployment has been decreasing. Less than 8% of young people are not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The percentage will improve with the new legislation for compulsory education. Total material consumption has not been decreasing even though the consumption in relation to GDP has been decreasing.

The average hourly earnings have risen steadily for both sexes. However, for men the level of earnings has been, and still is, higher than that of women.

Overall, the working environments are safe and secure for all workers.

### SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Adjusted GDP growth (%)	-0.2	2020	●	●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	1.7	2018	●	●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	99.8	2017	●	↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.9	2020	●	↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.9	2015	●	↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	71.2	2020	●	↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	10.8	2020	●	↑

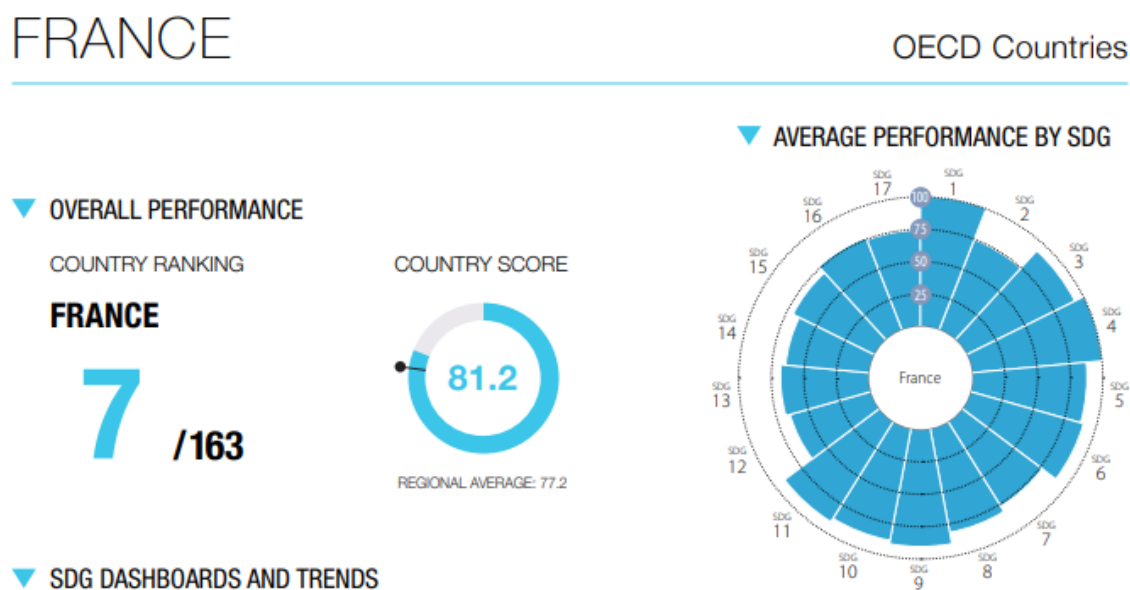
### 2.2.2.3 FRANCE

France strongly supported the United Nations' adoption in September 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals for the world to eradicate extreme poverty, combat inequalities and protect the planet. France has achieved a high standard of living and quality of life driven by inclusive social security systems (unemployment benefits, supplementary benefits and redistributive policy) and access for all to healthcare and basic goods and services (water, energy, quality food and education). The country has also developed state-of-the-art public and private infrastructures (innovation and research, transport, communications, and cultural heritage). Yet there is still work to be done, especially to reduce social, educational and gender inequalities, maintain healthy ecosystems and sustainably manage natural resources. In a climate of low growth and despite a downturn

in recent months, unemployment remains persistently too high, especially among young people.

**France is ranked 7/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 81.2 % SDG Index and has a 57.8% spillover score.**

**Figure 32: France’s SDG-report 2021<sup>20</sup>**



**Table 15: France’s detailed SDG4<sup>21</sup> – Quality Education report**

SDG4 – Quality Education			
Participation rate in pre-primary organized learning (% of children aged 4 to 6)	99.9	2019	● ↑
Net primary enrollment rate (%)	100.0	2019	● ↑
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	99.5	2019	● ↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 to 24)	NA	NA	● ●
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25 to 34)	49.4	2020	● ↑
PISA score (worst 0–600 best)	493.7	2018	● ↑
Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%)	20.1	2018	● →
Underachievers in science (% of 15-year-olds)	20.5	2018	● ↑

<sup>20</sup> <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/france>

<sup>21</sup> <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/france>

SDG5 – Gender Equality

Indicator	Value	Year	Color	Arrow
Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49)	95.5	2005	Green	Up
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%)	96.6	2019	Yellow	Up
Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate (%)	86.1	2020	Green	Up
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	39.5	2020	Yellow	Up
Gender wage gap (% of male median wage)	11.8	2018	Yellow	Down

### SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Adjusted GDP growth (%)	-0.6	2020	Yellow	Grey
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	2.0	2018	Green	Grey
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	94.0	2017	Green	Up
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.8	2020	Green	Up
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	1.7	2015	Yellow	Up
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	66.1	2020	Green	Up
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	15.0	2020	Red	Up

#### 2.2.2.4 POLAND

Official SDG Statistics - Indicators for Global Goals<sup>22</sup>. The most important data was selected from the point of view of the target group of the project. If an indicator is omitted, there is no reliable data.

#### Results for SDG Indicator 4.4b and 4.5.b for Poland

**Table 16: SD Goal 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Indicator 4.4.b - Adults participating in education or training<sup>23</sup>

Age / Year	2018	2019	2020
Age 45-54	4,3%	3,8%	2,6%
Age 50-74	2,0%	1,7%	1,2%
Age 55-64	1,9%	1,7%	1,4%

<sup>22</sup> Central Statistical Office (GUS) <https://sdg.gov.pl/>

<sup>23</sup> [https://sdg.gov.pl/statistics\\_nat/4-4-b/](https://sdg.gov.pl/statistics_nat/4-4-b/)

### Table 17: SD Goal 4: - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Indicator 4.5.b - Percentage of people with secondary digital skills<sup>24</sup>

Age / Year	2018	2019	2020
Age 45-54	13%	14%	19%
Age 55-64	6%	6%	7%
Age 65-74	2%	2%	2%

Poland is ranked 12/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 80,5 % SDG Index and has a 80,9% spillover score.

Figure 33: Poland's SDG-report 2021<sup>25</sup>

## POLAND

OECD Countries

### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

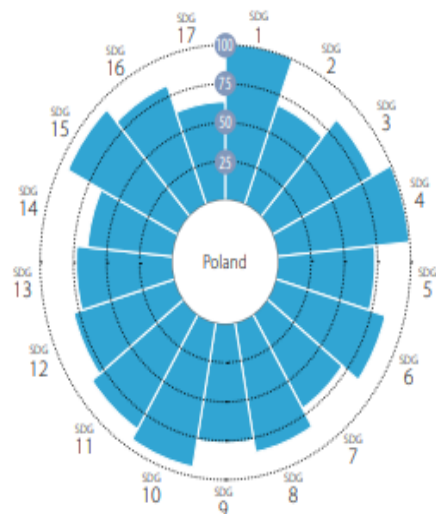
COUNTRY RANKING

**POLAND**  
**12** / 163

COUNTRY SCORE



### AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BY SDG



### SDG DASHBOARDS AND TRENDS

<sup>24</sup> [https://sdg.gov.pl/statistics\\_nat/4-5-b/](https://sdg.gov.pl/statistics_nat/4-5-b/)

<sup>25</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/poland>



**Table 18: Poland's detailed SDG4<sup>26</sup> – Quality Education report**

SDG4 – Quality Education			
Participation rate in pre-primary organized learning (% of children aged 4 to 6)	98.8	2019	● ↑
Net primary enrollment rate (%)	98.9	2019	● ↑
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	103.3	2019	● ↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 to 24)	99.8	2008	● ●
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25 to 34)	42.4	2020	● ↑
PISA score (worst 0–600 best)	513.0	2018	● ↑
Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%)	12.6	2018	● ↑
Underachievers in science (% of 15-year-olds)	13.8	2018	● ↑

SDG5 – Gender Equality			
Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49)	* 72.9	2022	● ↗
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%)	100.8	2019	● ↑
Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate (%)	73.6	2020	● ↑
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	28.7	2020	● →
Gender wage gap (% of male median wage)	8.7	2020	● ↑

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth			
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	1.5	2020	● ●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	3.4	2018	● ●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	86.7	2017	● ↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.7	2020	● ↓
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.4	2015	● ↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	67.8	2020	● ↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	13.5	2020	● ↑

### 2.2.2.5 SLOVENIA

The monitoring and implementation of the 17 sustainable development goals in Slovenia falls under the responsibility of various public authorities.

Documents and legislation supporting sustainable development in Slovenia:

- National strategy of social responsibility in Slovenia - The European Union states among its guidelines that in the spirit of the 2020 strategy, each member state should have a National Strategy for the development of corporate social responsibility. In 2017, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia also started preparing it.
- The Companies Act transposes provisions on non-financial reporting into Slovenian legislation.

<sup>26</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/poland>

- Framework program for the transition to a green economy (2015) - is a document of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the purpose of which is to support the process of transition to a green economy and to link the measures and activities of sectoral policies.

SDG 4 in Slovenia: In Slovenia, participation of young people in education is at a high level – compared to the EU average Slovenia has about the same share of adults (25–64 years) with tertiary education and an above-average share of young people with tertiary education, this increasing rapidly. For several years now the structure of enrolment in secondary and tertiary education has been changing to meet labour market needs, although in a period of high demand for labour Slovenia faced a shortage of labour with the required skills. Despite Slovenia's favourable position in several areas, challenges in certain areas of education and lifelong learning still need to be addressed. According to the international PIAAC survey, the quality indicators of adult education show poor textual, mathematical and digital skills among adults, especially the low-educated and the elderly, who are also less likely to take part in lifelong learning.. Education for sustainable development (ESD) is becoming an important part of education for active citizenship. Slovenia plans to update the existing national ESD Guidelines and to appoint cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination groups in this area.

In 2018, with the aim of improving adult participation in learning, Slovenia adopted a new Adult Education Act, which establishes a public service and a network of public service providers also in the field of adult education. Each year, Slovenia adopts an annual adult education programme based on the Resolution on the National Adult Education Programme in the Republic of Slovenia. By participating in the policy development project GOAL, Slovenia also plays an active role at the international level, which puts Slovenia on the European map of good practices in terms of counselling in the field of adult education.

([https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26450VNR\\_2020\\_Slovenia\\_Report.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26450VNR_2020_Slovenia_Report.pdf))

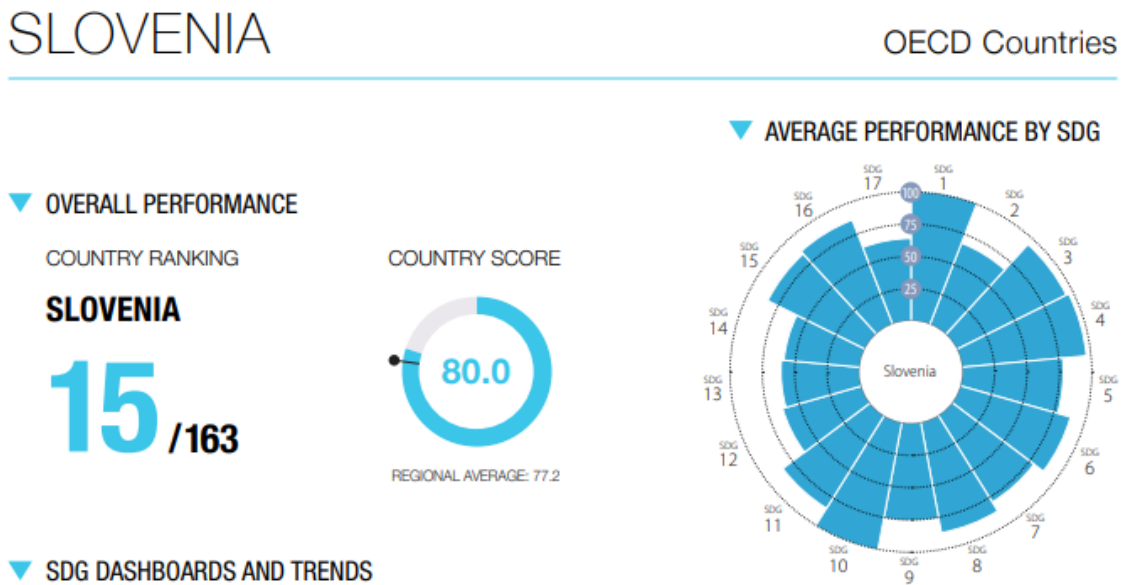
Slovenia's SDG-report(2021)<sup>27</sup>

**Slovenia is ranked 15/163 countries in the SDG Index Rank, has a country score of 80,0 % SDG Index and has a 60,9% spillover score.**

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<sup>27</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/slovenia>

**Figure 34: Slovenia’s SDG-report 2021<sup>28</sup>**



**Table 19: Slovenia’s detailed SDG4<sup>29</sup> – Quality Education report**

SDG4 – Quality Education			
Participation rate in pre-primary organized learning (% of children aged 4 to 6)	91.6	2019	↑
Net primary enrollment rate (%)	99.9	2019	↑
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	96.2	2019	↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 to 24)	99.8	2014	→
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 25 to 34)	45.4	2020	↑
PISA score (worst 0–600 best)	503.7	2018	↑
Variation in science performance explained by socio-economic status (%)	13.0	2018	↗
Underachievers in science (% of 15-year-olds)	14.6	2018	↑

**Results for SDG Indicator 4.4.1 for Slovenia**

Results for SDG Indicator 4.4.1 for Slovenia Proportion of youth/adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill

SDG indicator 4.4.1 Proportion of population able to use copy and paste tools – Slovenia: 51,50 % (2015).

<sup>28</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/slovenia>

<sup>29</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/poland>

## SDG5 – Gender Equality

Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49)	* 78.8 2022	●	↑
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%)	99.2 2019	●	↑
Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate (%)	85.3 2020	●	↑
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	27.8 2020	●	↓
Gender wage gap (% of male median wage)	8.2 2018	●	↓

## SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Adjusted GDP growth (%)	0.2 2020	●	●
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	2.2 2018	●	●
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	97.5 2017	●	↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.8 2020	●	↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.9 2015	●	↑
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	70.1 2020	●	↑
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (% of population aged 15 to 29)	9.1 2020	●	↑

## 3. Ageing workforce regulations

### 3.1. State policy and adopted strategy<sup>30</sup>

#### 3.1.1. General findings on state policy and adopted strategy (all partner countries)

The right to work and the right to earn a decent income through work is a fundamental right that is guaranteed by the constitution and by international and European treaties. It is important that everyone in our society can participate adequately in the labour market, in order to guarantee this right to work. But this is only possible if the conditions for facilitating this participation are created.

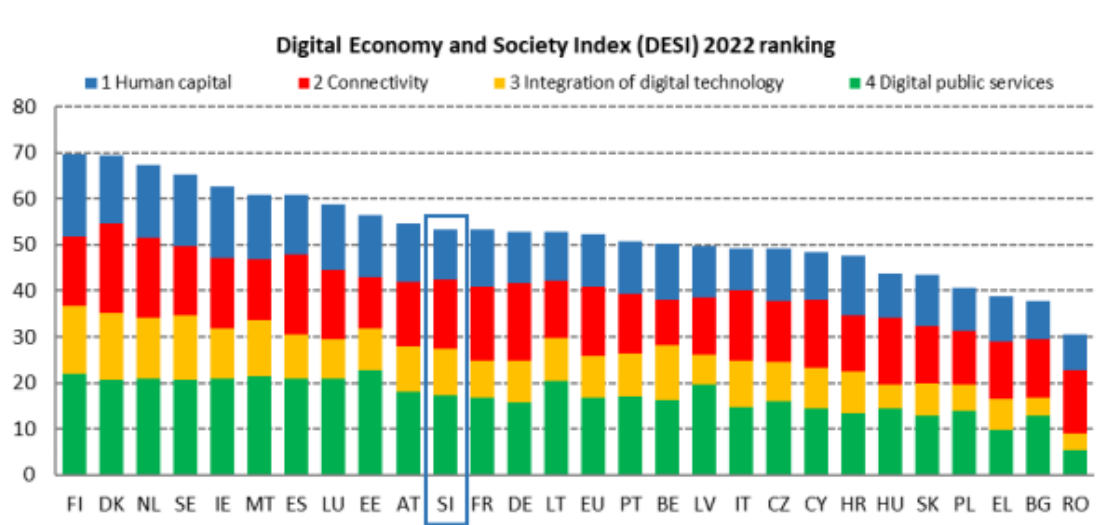
The European Commission is determined to tackle the digital skills gap and promote projects and strategies to improve the level of digital skills in Europe.

<sup>30</sup>

[https://employment.belgium.be/sites/default/files/content/documents/Welzijn%20op%20het%20werk/EN/nat\\_strategie\\_EN.pdf](https://employment.belgium.be/sites/default/files/content/documents/Welzijn%20op%20het%20werk/EN/nat_strategie_EN.pdf)

All Europeans need digital skills to study, work, communicate, access online public services and find trustworthy information. However, many Europeans do not have adequate digital skills. To follow the development of the digital transition and the digital skills gap the Commission publishes DESI annually. It tracks Member States' digital performance in different areas to monitor progress and pinpoint where further efforts are necessary.

**Figure 35: DESI 2022 ranking**



<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi-slovenia>

The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) shows that 4 out of 10 adults and every third person who works in Europe lack basic digital skills. There is also low representation of women in tech-related professions and studies, with only 1 in 6 ICT specialists and 1 in 3 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) graduates being women.

**The European Commission has set targets in the European skills agenda and the digital education action plan to ensure that 70% of adults have basic digital skills by 2025.** These initiatives aim to reduce the level of 13-14 year-olds who underperform in computing and digital literacy from 30% (2019) to 15% in 2030.

The European Digital Skills and Jobs Platform is a new initiative launched under the Connecting Europe Facility Programme. It offers information and resources on digital skills, as well as training and funding opportunities.

Over 70% of businesses have said that the lack of staff with adequate digital skills is an obstacle to investment. Europe also faces a shortage of digital experts who can develop cutting-edge technologies for the benefit of all citizens.

A strong digital economy powered by Europeans with digital skills is vital for innovation, growth, jobs, and European competitiveness. The spread of digital technologies is having a massive impact on the labour market and the type of skills needed in the economy and in society.

Member States, business, training providers, the European Commission and other organisations need to work together to tackle the digital skills gap.

Recovery and resilience plans (RRPs) - in all partner countries respond to the urgent need of **fostering a strong recovery and making Belgium; Finland, France, Poland and Slovenia future-ready**. The reforms and investments in the RRP will help all partner countries become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions.

All together (according to data provided – no specific data for Poland) 270 investments and 106 reforms are planned in the partner countries – the value of the grants is 49,2 billion EUR, mostly dedicated to support climate objectives and digital transition in the partner countries.

Digital transition – **digital challenges** in Belgium include addressing lack of digital skills, strengthening fibre and 5G readiness and the digital transformation of public services; in Finland, which is considered highly developed when it comes to digitalization next generation access remains at the level of 75%, investments are planned in streamlining work and education based immigration; in France challenges remain in the areas of connectivity and coverage of fast broadband networks, and in the appropriation of digital technologies by the private sector (especially SMEs). France is still far behind the front runners in terms of digital skills. Digital challenges for the Slovenian economy are covered by the Strategy for the digital transformation of the economy (January 2022): they include a lack of digital skills, low up-take of public digital services and of integration of digital technology into business models.

### Key measures

In all partner countries some of the key investments concern the support to businesses by helping them make the most of digital technologies, development of digital skills and digital inclusion.

If we look at the state policies and adapted strategies regarding 50+ population we see the following picture: in Belgium the axis “Strengthening participation in the labor market”: Sustainable work for all worker is at place; in Finland a new development programme WORK2030 (<https://hyvatyo.ttl.fi/tyo2030/work2030>) aims at lifting Finland up as one of the leading countries in digital transition and work well-being by 2030. The programme aims at promoting lifelong learning and improving the work life skills of adult citizens; in France the State encourages the recruitment and retention of older workers. The conclusion of agreements and action plans for older workers are among the obligations of employers; in Poland the state's strategy in the respect of ageing population is as follows: Social policy towards the elderly 2030. Security - Participation - Solidarity was adopted by the Council of Ministers on October 26, 2018; in Slovenia The Labour Relations Act (ZDR-1) defines who are older employees (55+). The Active Ageing Strategy with the goal of creating a society friendly to all generations is at place. It is divided into four clusters: 1. Labor market and education, 2. Independent, healthy and safe living, for all generations, 3. Participation in society, 4. Creating an environment that supports an active life throughout the life course.

### 3.1.2. Findings on state policy and adopted strategy per partner country

#### 3.1.2.1 BELGIUM

The axis “Strengthening participation in the labor market”: Sustainable work for all workers.

In this respect, we must pay attention to people with a disability who wish to enter the labor market. In times of migration and temporary work by foreign workers, we must also pay attention to workers who have insufficient knowledge of one of the national languages of Belgium and as a result insufficiently understand safety rules or do not understand what exactly is expected from them.

Another objective aims to ensure that people who are already working can continue to work. One of the major challenges in a demographic context of ageing is to ensure that the right conditions are created for facilitating this. This requires the labor conditions and conditions of employment to be adapted to the employees and that labor relations in the workplace are optimal. This constitutes a major challenge for the government as well as for the social partners. If we want to keep **older workers** working, then their capacities must also be taken into account. This means that ergonomic adjustments to work stations should be possible for all employees, also in SMEs and in microenterprises, e.g., by providing financial incentives. Research into the physical and especially mental pressure of labor and how to tackle this is also an important point for attention. Close cooperation with the regions is vital. This can be achieved through a cooperation agreement, based on participation and shared responsibility of all the stakeholders.

#### Background

##### **Belgium’s recovery and resilience plan<sup>31</sup>**

Following an unprecedented crisis due to the pandemic, Belgium’s recovery and resilience plan responds to the urgent need of **fostering a strong recovery and making Belgium future-ready**. The reforms and investments in the plan will help Belgium become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. To this end, the plan consists of 105 investments and 35 reforms. They will be supported by **€5.9 billion in grants**. **50%** of the plan will support **climate objectives** and **27%** of the plan will support the **digital transition**.

**The transformative impact of Belgium’s plan is the result of a strong combination of reforms and investments which address the specific challenges for Belgium.** The reforms address bottlenecks to lasting and sustainable growth, while investments are targeted to **accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient economy**, to maximise the benefits of the digital transformation and to ensure social

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<sup>31</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/belgiums-recovery-and-resilience-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/belgiums-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en)

cohesion. The plan also intends to **improve connectivity** within the country, boost labour market performance, innovation capacity of the economy and make public spending more efficient and sustainable. All reforms and investments have to be implemented **within a tight time-frame**, as the Regulation on the Recovery and Resilience Facility foresees they have to be completed by August 2026.

## Digital transition

**Digital challenges** for the Belgian economy include addressing a lack of digital skills, strengthening fibre and 5G readiness and the digital transformation of public services.

## Key measures for the digital transition

Belgium's recovery and resilience plan supports the digital transition with **investments in the digitalization of the public administration, in skills and digital inclusion, in cyber security and in connectivity**. It will invest €480 million in education, for a more inclusive and future-proof education system across communities with digital and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) skills of pupils and students and access to digital tools and technology. Furthermore, the plan will invest **€585 million in the digital transformation of the public administration, justice system and health care system** to improve access for citizens and businesses, and a set of reforms that will contribute to the deployment of 5G and the deployment of ultra-fast connectivity infrastructure, such as fibre.

## Example project: Digitalization in education

In the Flemish community, a digital device will be provided to all school students, effective learning tools and training will be provided to teachers to improve their digital skills, and schools will be supported in adapting their curricula to the digital transition by setting up a central knowledge and advisory center. In the French- and German-speaking communities the plan will equip schools and higher education institutions with modern digital equipment and will train students and teachers with dedicated digital skills tools and methods.

### 3.1.2.2 FINLAND

According to the latest government policy, a new development programme **WORK2030** (<https://hyvatyo.ttl.fi/tyo2030/work2030>) aims at lifting Finland up as one of the leading countries in digital transition and work well-being by 2030. The programme aims at promoting lifelong learning and improving the work life skills of adult citizens.

Even though 79% have basic digital skills in Finland, the skills start to deteriorate already around 45 years of age, and only one in ten employees aged 55-65 had adequate digital skills for working life. The majority of 55+-year-olds reported not having used computers or failed at very basic level tasks when working on a computer. 50+-year-olds also face higher risks in



long-term unemployment as the degree they have is outdated and doesn't guarantee employment as it earlier did. New ways of learning and reeducation are unfamiliar to them which makes it more challenging to update one's skills in working life (<https://journal.fi/tyoelamantutkimus/article/view/85290>).

Digital and Population Data Services Agency develops digital support ([https://dvv.fi/documents/16079645/20502009/Yritysten+ja+yhteis%C3%B6jen+digiosaaminen+-+Suosituksia+digituen+tarjoamisesta+2021\\_ENG.pdf/eae15dd-b503-9f46-81af-7b15c3ca33e8/Yritysten+ja+yhteis%C3%B6jen+digiosaaminen+-+Suosituksia+digituen+tarjoamisesta+2](https://dvv.fi/documents/16079645/20502009/Yritysten+ja+yhteis%C3%B6jen+digiosaaminen+-+Suosituksia+digituen+tarjoamisesta+2021_ENG.pdf/eae15dd-b503-9f46-81af-7b15c3ca33e8/Yritysten+ja+yhteis%C3%B6jen+digiosaaminen+-+Suosituksia+digituen+tarjoamisesta+2)) for citizens as one of its permanent services and coordinates the operation of digital support networks. The support offers support for the use of e-services, other services and electronic devices. The digital support project gives recommendations and support to companies and communities on how to best organize their digital support. Companies need to identify the challenges and opportunities in using digital tools to be able to support digital competences of their employees. The Programme for Promoting Digitalisation created by the Ministry of Finance aims at increasing the technology and digitalization capabilities of the public sector and enhancing cooperation with the private sector. The Act on the Provision of Digital Services requires a certain level of public services being provided as digital services to citizens and companies which would decrease the need for non-electronic and appointment-based services. In order to meet the requirements, both users and the providers must have digital competence and, therefore, digital support should be available throughout the country.

Finland ranks first in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), and is among the highest rank in digital transformation of businesses. Along with Sweden, Finland has the highest proportion of IT specialists in the labour force ( 7.4%). Finland also has the most digitalised SMEs with 82% compared to the 90% of the Digital Decade target. Digital public services are the most advanced of the digital economies in the EU.

## Background

### **Finland's Recovery and Resilience Plan**

Finland's recovery and resilience plan ([https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/finlands-recovery-and-resilience-plan\\_en#finlands-recovery-and-resilience-plan](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/finlands-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en#finlands-recovery-and-resilience-plan)) aims at fostering strong recovery and making Finland future-ready. The reforms and investments will help Finland move towards green and digital transitions, and the plan addresses the specific challenges that Finland still faces. The plan consists of 39 investments and 18 reforms, which will be supported by €2.1 billion in grants. 50% of the plan supports climate objectives and 27% digital transitions. Finland, alongside with a few other countries, allocates more than half of its digital budget into the digitalisation of public services.

The reforms address bottlenecks to lasting and sustainable growth, while the investments aim to accelerate the digital transformation, research and investment in the green transition, to promote employment and skills improvement, and to improve access to health care and social services across the country. All reforms and investments have to be implemented by August 2026.

## Digital transition

Even though Finland is considered a highly developed nation when it comes to digitalisation, next generation access remains at the level of 75%. Furthermore, access to NGA is not distributed evenly. In broadband connections rural areas lag behind remarkably with 46% whereas urban areas have an access of 76%. Therefore the RRP will invest €50 million in high-speed broadband infrastructure across Finland.

It will invest €46 million in continuous learning and €20 million in streamlining work- and education-based immigration. Social and health care services will receive €100 million for digital innovations.

### 3.1.2.3 FRANCE

**The State encourages the recruitment and retention of older workers. The conclusion of agreements and action plans for older workers are among the obligations of employers.**

In addition, there are several aids and measures for employees who have lost their jobs in order to facilitate their (re)integration into the labor market.

Employers can apply for state aid for any recruitment of jobseekers aged 45 and over under a professionalization contract.

The professionalization contract is an employment contract concluded between an employer and an employee which enables the latter to acquire - within the framework of continuing education - a professional qualification (diploma, title, certificate of professional qualification) recognized by the State and/or the professional branch. They also recipients of the active solidarity income (RSA), the specific solidarity allowance (ASS) or the disabled adults' allowance (AAH), and people who have benefited from a subsidized contract (single integration contract - CUI).

**The "Senior" fixed-term contract (CDD Senior) is a fixed-term contract reserved for certain people at the end of their career, the duration of which is specifically defined.**

**Older workers face "specific difficulties" that can hinder their continued employment or their return to work.** Among all those identified and analyzed by the authors, we note the weight of negative representations linked to age. Life expectancy is increasing, but stereotypes remain. **Age is thus, along with gender, the main reason given for experiences of work-related discrimination, far ahead of ethnic origin for example.**

Another barrier is health. More than half of the people who left work prematurely attribute their decision to health problems. This is a figure that should be taken seriously in the context of a near-stagnation in disability-free life expectancy at the age of 50 since the early 2000s. More broadly, difficult, or even painful working conditions, without job adjustments, can sometimes

discourage people from remaining in work. 28% of senior citizens surveyed cite this as an important reason for their decision to retire.

Finally, gaps within digital skills. To tackle the following France is reliant on the European the European Commission is determined to tackle the digital skills gap and promote projects and strategies to improve the level of digital skills in Europe.

The European Digital Skills and Jobs Platform is a new initiative launched under the Connecting Europe Facility Program. It offers information and resources on digital skills, as well as training and funding opportunities.

Background:

### France's recovery and resilience plan

Following an unprecedented crisis due to the pandemic, France's recovery and resilience plan responds to the urgent need of fostering a strong recovery and making France future ready. The reforms and investments in the plan will help France become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. To this end, according to the National Recovery and Resilience Plan from the French Government, consists of 20 reforms and 71 investments. They will be supported by €39.4 billion in grants. 46% of the plan will support climate objectives and 21% will foster the digital transition<sup>32</sup>

The transformative impact of France's plan is the result of a strong combination of reforms and investments which address the specific challenges of France. The reforms address bottlenecks to lasting and sustainable growth, while investments are targeted to accelerate the transition towards more sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient economy, to **support the digital transformation of all economic actors** including public authorities, and to make the French economy more resilient thanks to investments in the health sector and **skills, from higher education and lifelong learning**. All reforms and investments must be implemented within a tight time frame, as the Regulation on the Recovery and Resilience Facility foresees, they must be completed by August 2026.

### Digital transition

France ranked 15th in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) in 2021.<sup>33</sup> Challenges remain in the areas of connectivity and coverage of fast broadband networks, and in the appropriation of digital technologies by the private sector (especially SMEs). France is still far behind the front runners in terms of digital skills.

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<sup>32</sup> [Le plan national de relance et de résilience | economie.gouv.fr](https://economie.gouv.fr)

<sup>33</sup> [France's recovery and resilience plan | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://european-commission.europa.eu)

### Key measures for the digital transition

€8.4 billion, or 21.3% of the French plan<sup>34</sup>, will be devoted to the digital transition. Some of the key investments concern the support to businesses by helping them make the most of digital technologies (€385 million), the digitalization of primary and secondary schools through digital equipment (€131 million) and the further digitalization of public services. €240 million will be invested in high-speed broadband across the territory aiming to provide access to very high-speed networks for all households (100% fibre-to-home) by 2025.

### Example project: Digitalization of the education and training systems

In order to improve the use of digital technologies in education, 45,000 classrooms should be equipped with new digital solutions and 1.4 million students in higher education should have access to hybrid learning by the end of 2022.<sup>35</sup>

#### 3.1.2.4 POLAND

The main strategy document in Poland is: Long-term Senior Policy in Poland for the years 2014-2020 (Rządowy program na rzecz aktywności osób starszych na lata 2014-2020). The program focused on the activity of the elderly, including professional activity. It was initiated and led by the previous government (ruling until 2015). The policy of the next government focused significantly on the caring approach, without significantly developing the threads of professional development. This fits in with the general welfare policy of the Polish government, the effect of which was, for example, lowering the retirement age and paying seniors additional pensioners (even two a year). In connection with the above, the active employment policy of people over 50 is currently not reflected in the facts. Currently, the government's policy is implemented through the Senior+<sup>36</sup>. So there seems to be a loophole. The government is focusing on older people and strengthening care for them (which affects the elderly rather than the working age). At the same time, 50+ employees are "invisible" to the government. For example: in 2021 and 2022, most of the grant competitions in the Senior+ program are devoted to establishing and running old people's homes or lighting for seniors<sup>37</sup>.

Another activity of the government is the Aktywni+ program<sup>38</sup>.

The main goal of this multi-annual program for the elderly for 2021-2025 is to increase the participation of older people in all areas of social life, in four priority areas:

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<sup>34</sup> [France's recovery and resilience plan | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>35</sup> [France's recovery and resilience plan | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>36</sup> <http://senior.gov.pl/en>

<sup>37</sup> *Country report – Information on Polish action on older persons and Implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing (2017)*, Ministerstwo Rodziny, Pracy i Polityki Społecznej.  
[https://unece.org/DAM/pau/age/country\\_rpts/2017/POL-Report-EN.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/pau/age/country_rpts/2017/POL-Report-EN.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> [http://senior.gov.pl/program\\_asos/strona/92](http://senior.gov.pl/program_asos/strona/92)

- Social activity, which includes activities aimed at increasing the participation of older people in active forms of spending free time, supporting dependent elderly people and their environment in the place of residence, developing voluntary work for older people in the local environment and increasing the involvement of older people in the labor market.
- Social participation, which contributes to strengthening the self-organization of the elderly environment and increasing the influence of the elderly on decisions concerning the living conditions of citizens.
- Digital inclusion, including activities aimed at increasing the skills of using modern technologies and using new media by older people, as well as disseminating and implementing technological solutions favoring social inclusion and safe functioning of the elderly.
- Preparation for old age by strengthening lasting intergenerational relations, shaping a positive image of the elderly and increasing the safety of seniors.

The state's strategy in this respect is as follows: Social policy towards the elderly 2030. Security - Participation - Solidarity was adopted by the Council of Ministers on October 26, 2018.

The entity responsible for coordinating the activities planned in the document is the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Policy.

One of the key parts of the document is the list of individual measures, the most relevant for elderly people are:

- Shaping a positive perception of old age in society.
- Creating conditions enabling the use of the potential of older people as active participants in economic life and the labor market, adapted to their psychophysical abilities and family situation.
- Activities for the benefit of education for old age (care and medical staff), to old age (the whole society), through old age (from the youngest generation) and education in old age (the elderly).

The present, relatively good situation of seniors in the labor market is rather the result of the previous government's actions and the policy of active professional support for people aged 50 and over<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> Long-term Senior Policy in Poland for the years 2014-2020 in outline (2014), Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej (pages: 29-32).  
[https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/OlderPersons/MIPAA/NHRI\\_Poland\\_Anne\\_x1.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/OlderPersons/MIPAA/NHRI_Poland_Anne_x1.pdf)

### 3.1.2.5 SLOVENIA

Slovenia's population of about 2 million is aging rapidly, even faster than the European Union average. The aging of the population in Slovenia is mainly the result of longer life expectancy and a decrease in birth rates among younger generations. More than a fifth of the population (20.7 percent) is now age 65 or older, and by 2050 this proportion is projected to reach 31 percent, representing nearly a third of Slovenia's population. In response to population aging, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia has sought to emphasize an interministerial approach, promote aging as a human rights issue, encourage intergenerational responses and support, and take part in discussions in the international level. Since its independence, Slovenia has evolved its aging strategies to become broader and more integrated into the larger community.

The Labour Relations Act (ZDR-1) defines who are older employees (55+).

In 2017, Slovenia's government adopted the current Active Ageing Strategy ([https://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/publikacije/kratke\\_analize/Strategija\\_dolgozive\\_druzbe/SDD\\_sprejeta/DolgozivaDruzba\\_splet.pdf](https://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/kratke_analize/Strategija_dolgozive_druzbe/SDD_sprejeta/DolgozivaDruzba_splet.pdf)) with the goal of creating a society friendly to all generations. The strategy follows the concept of active aging, recognizes the heterogeneity of the older population, and shows an understanding of aging as a process and recognizes the need to age with purpose — in sum conveying a positive vision of extended life years. In seeking intergenerational cooperation and solidarity to address demographic change, the strategy's purpose is to spur various sectors to take action. In addition to pursuing immediate solutions, the government is seeking to prepare for the future by focusing on the trends that will shape that future—including technological development and digitization of the society, a shifting understanding of the working life cycle, and changes in the labor market resulting from the increase in flexible forms of work. The Active Ageing Strategy is divided into four clusters: 1. Labor market and education, 2. Independent, healthy and safe living, for all generations, 3. Participation in society, 4. Creating an environment that supports an active life throughout the life course.

On the basis of the adopted Strategy, the Council for Active Ageing and Cooperation between Generations was established as a permanent expert consultative body of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. (<https://www.aarpinternational.org/the-journal/current-edition/journal-articles-blog/2021/12/atj2021-kenda>)

#### Background

#### Slovenia's recovery and resilience plan<sup>40</sup>

Following an unprecedented crisis due to the pandemic, Slovenia's recovery and resilience plan responds to the urgent need of **fostering a strong recovery and making Slovenia future-ready**. The reforms and investments in the plan will help Slovenia become more

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<sup>40</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/belgiums-recovery-and-resilience-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/belgiums-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en)

sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. To this end, the plan consists of **55 investments and 33 reforms**. They will be supported by **1.8 € billion in grants and 0.7 € billion in loans**. **42%** of the plan will support **climate objectives** and **21%** of the plan will foster the **digital transition**.

**The transformative impact of Slovenia's plan is the result of a strong combination of reforms and investments which address the specific challenges of Slovenia.** The reforms address bottlenecks to lasting and sustainable growth, while investments are targeted to **accelerate transition towards a greener economy, maximise the benefits of the digital transformation and ensure social-economic cohesion and resilience**. The plan is expected to significantly contribute to Slovenia's digitalisation, including by strengthening digital skills through education and life-long learning. All reforms and investments have to be implemented **within a tight time frame**, as the Regulation on the Recovery and Resilience Facility foresees they have to be completed by August 2026.

## Digital transition

Digital challenges for the Slovenian economy are covered by the Strategy for the digital transformation of the economy (January 2022): the advanced digital technologies that enable the digital transformation of the economy, the effective ecosystem for a competitive economy, an open and sustainable society as the basis for the growth of the digital economy. They include a lack of digital skills, low up-take of public digital services and of integration of digital technology into business models. The measures set out in the strategy will be implemented by the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology in cooperation with the SPIRIT Slovenia Public Agency, the Slovene Enterprise Fund and the SID Bank. To this end, €26.5 million will be available in 2022, a further €24 million in 2023 and €6 million in 2024.

### Key measures for the digital transition

Slovenia's recovery and resilience plan supports the digital transition with reforms in the digitalisation of the public administration, in skills and cyber security. A strategy for digital transformation and reforms on electronic identification aims to increase use of public e-services and digitalization of companies. These reforms are accompanied by **€260 million investments in public administration**, including in key public sectors like **health (€83 million)**. The plan will invest **€144 million in increasing digital skills** of different segments of society and in improving connectivity in schools. **€44 million** will be invested for the digital transition of businesses by supporting the implementation of advanced digital technologies in companies.

### Example project: Digitalisation in education

The development of digital literacy in education will be supported through **an overhaul of curricula at all education levels** (from early childhood education and care to higher education). To empower schools for this task, **20,000 teachers/educators will be trained in digital skills** and supported **with updated teaching practices**. Moreover, the plan will support investments in **improving connectivity of schools**, thus reducing digital divide, and in **creating modern digitally equipped learning places**. Slovenia will also develop **new**

**digital solutions to better support the learning process** (e.g. e-national examination, project-based learning etc.)

## 3.2. Obligations and rights due to ageing workforce for companies (SME's)

### 3.2.1 General findings about obligations and rights due to ageing workforce for companies (SMEs) (all partner countries)

The situation in partner countries at a glance:

In **Belgium** the Belgian National Strategy for Wellbeing at Work 2016-2020 as proposed by the Minister of Employment: Strategic and operational objectives is at force to provide protection of employees; employers hold the final responsibility for the well-being of workers and as such must implement a prevention policy; they are even exposed to criminal responsibility, in some cases to civil liability.

In **Finland**, according to the Non-discrimination Act, all employees must be treated equally regardless of their sex, age, nationality, health, religion, or any other factor. Employers hold the responsibility to make a yearly plan to maintain and proceed the professional skills of their employees. Special attention must be given to maintain the employability and the ability of the ageing workforce to work. The size of the company and the effects on the company need to be taken into account when making part-time agreements. Some employers allow additional days off for ageing employees who have had a long career in the company.

In **France** the agreement and action plan for senior citizens<sup>41</sup> was established through the report published by ARACT (regional action to improve working conditions) in 2010, as a practical guide for the development and implementation of an action plan on a regional and national level; the aim is to encourage the professional activity of employees aged 50+; since 2010, penalties have been provided for private companies and public establishments that do not meet their obligation.

In **Poland** senior workers are protected according to Article 39 of the Polish Labor Code, pre-retirement protection means that the employer may not terminate the employment contract if the employee (during the employment period) is no more than 4 years before reaching the retirement age; further changes are developed by the Social Dialogue Council together with selected trade unions to enable more rights to the senior employees.

In **Slovenia**, according to the Labour Relations Act (ZDR-1), older workers have special protection. The prohibition of discrimination based on age, as a personal circumstance, comes

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<sup>41</sup> [6914375.PDF \(aract.fr\)](#)



from Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, as the highest legal act, which was also confirmed by the judgment of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia. Article 6 of the ZDR-1 also explicitly stipulates that the employer must provide the same treatment to the job seeker during employment or to the worker during the duration of the employment relationship and in connection with the termination of the employment contract, regardless of age. Furthermore, age is also considered as an unjustified reason for regular termination of an employment contract.

### 3.2.2. Obligations and rights due to ageing work force for companies (SMEs) (per partner country)

#### 3.2.2.1 BELGIUM

The Belgian National Strategy for Wellbeing at Work 2016-2020 as proposed by the Minister of Employment: Strategic and operational objectives<sup>42</sup>:

Employers hold the final responsibility for the well-being of workers in their enterprise and as such must implement a prevention policy. SMEs especially find it difficult to develop a prevention policy in accordance with legislation. They must be offered tools and guidance as they have fewer opportunities to have a thorough knowledge of all the regulations. It is of utmost importance that a policy is implemented that specifically targets SMEs, especially in an SME country like Belgium. The aim is not to reduce the protection of employees in SMEs. On the contrary even, all employees are entitled to the same level of protection, regardless of the company's size. But targeted action aimed at SMEs must be developed, which takes into account their specific characteristics, needs and knowledge, e.g. by providing the necessary resources (such as the Online Interactive Risk Assessment or OiRA, and Deparis) and incentives for a better application of legislation. Besides this, better support and guidance from intermediary structures is also necessary. These include the external services for prevention and protection at work or cooperation with a joint service for prevention and protection at work.

#### 3.2.2.2 FINLAND

It is well recognised in Finland that there is a large group of employees whose working skills are in danger of becoming outdated. This is partially due to the fact that many have worked most of their careers under the same employer when the need to update one's skills has not been seen as a top priority. However, as working life is taking major steps forward especially in terms of digitalization, employees with a long working history are not the key actors in the organisation anymore. In the worst case scenario, the possibilities to develop one's skills in working life decrease imperceptibly which also lowers the employees' employability. On the

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[https://employment.belgium.be/sites/default/files/content/documents/Welzijn%20op%20het%20werk/EN/nat\\_strategie\\_EN.pdf](https://employment.belgium.be/sites/default/files/content/documents/Welzijn%20op%20het%20werk/EN/nat_strategie_EN.pdf)

other hand, the organisations might not recognise the growing gap between the existing skills of its employees and the competency that would be needed in the coming years.

In 2020 the government aligned actions to raise the employment rate of 55+ employees. The aim of the actions is to promote well-being at work and the ability to work, and to make sure that the employees have the skills needed at their work. According to the estimates by the Ministry of Finance, the actions should bring over 10,000 employees into employment. The actions include the following ([https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10616/51049773/liite\\_yli-55-vuotiaiden-ty%C3%B6llisyysasteen-nostamine\\_n.pdf/0ab740d4-135b-7fa3-60f4-466f118e8e26/liite\\_yli-55-vuotiaiden-ty%C3%B6llisyys\\_asteen-nostaminen.pdf?t=1608231551442](https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10616/51049773/liite_yli-55-vuotiaiden-ty%C3%B6llisyysasteen-nostamine_n.pdf/0ab740d4-135b-7fa3-60f4-466f118e8e26/liite_yli-55-vuotiaiden-ty%C3%B6llisyys_asteen-nostaminen.pdf?t=1608231551442)):

- removing the right to extension in the unemployment benefit to get the 55+ employees back to working life sooner.
- a flexicurity model for 55+ employees who have been working for the same employer for at least 5 years. According to the model, the employers are obliged to participate in the costs to provide training for the fired or laid off employees to ease their redeployment.
- a wage subsidy for all the 55+ people who have been unemployed for 24 months during the past 28 months
- raising the maximum amount of deduction for earned income by €200 a year
- the necessary actions for quicker redeployment start at the unemployment office already during the term of notice
- part-time contract will be made possible for 55+ employees who have worked for the same employer at least for 3 years to promote coping at work. The Occupational Safety and Health Act will be reviewed to better respond to coping at work through changes that better take into consideration ageing, and physical and mental well-being of the employees.

Overall, the government has decided on actions to raise the employment rate up to 75% with a budget of €110 million by the mid-2020s. The actions are estimated to employ over 80,000 people. The actions also aim at strengthening the level of competence and well-being of the employees. Those with inadequate education or training will be brought to further education and training to ease employment or redeployment. These mainly focus on young people, ageing workforce and immigrants.

According to the Non-discrimination Act, all employees must be treated equally regardless of their sex, age, nationality, health, religion, or any other factor. Employers are obliged to maintain safe and durable working conditions for all of their employees. They need to ensure that the working conditions promote the well-being and safety of all of their employees. They need to take into account the physical and mental factors of their employees and make sure that their professional competence matches with the requirements of their work tasks. Employers are also obliged to estimate their employees' ability to work when it comes to safety and risk management at workplaces.

Employers hold the responsibility to make a yearly plan to maintain and proceed the professional skills of their employees. Special attention must be given to maintain the employability and the ability of the ageing workforce to work. Also the special needs of the ageing workforce need to be taken into consideration. Employees aged 56 and over have the right for part-time retirement in order to be able to continue working until the age of retirement. The size of the company and the effects on the company need to be taken into account when making part-time agreements. Some employers allow additional days off for ageing employees who have had a long career in the company.

### 3.2.2.3 FRANCE

The agreement and action plan for senior citizens<sup>43</sup> was established through the report published by ARACT (regional action to improve working conditions) in 2010, as a practical guide for the development and implementation of an action plan on a regional and national level in France.

The aim is to encourage the professional activity of employees aged 50 and over. The legislative measures are the following:

- A quantified target for maintaining employees aged 55 and over in employment and for recruiting people aged 50 and over into the company.
- Anticipation of the evolution of professional careers.
- Improvement of working conditions and prevention of difficult situations.
- Development of skills and qualifications, access to training.
- Transmission of knowledge and skills and development of mentoring.
- Adjusting the end of careers and the transition between work and retirement.

Since 2010, penalties have been provided for private companies and public establishments that do not meet their obligation. The obligation on behalf of the companies towards 50 + employees are the following<sup>44</sup>:

- obligation to conduct a professional interview
- Obligation to offer one of the following contracts to facilitate employment of 50 + employees: single inclusion scheme contract, inclusion contract or senior contract
- Obligation to provide appropriate training along career: Employment and Skills Pathways (ESP) and or professionalization contracts

The financial penalty applicable is significant since it can reach 1% of the company's remuneration. It is paid to the National Old Age Insurance Fund.

Measures for the benefit of older workers in companies

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<sup>43</sup> [6914375.PDF \(aract.fr\)](#)

<sup>44</sup> [L'emploi des seniors : les obligations des entreprises - Atout-âge \(atout-age.fr\)](#)

The company is obliged to hold a professional interview (formerly known as the second part of the career interview), which can help to adjust the end of the career. This interview must be conducted every two years and every six years it gives rise to a summary of the employee's career path. It provides an opportunity to discuss the employee's prospects for development and to draw up a training plan.

The single integration contract can be applied to senior citizens and helps to promote the recruitment of people in difficulty in the non-profit sector (local authorities, care establishments, non-profit associations, etc.).

The CDI inclusion, created in 2020 in an economic and health context linked to the Covid-19 epidemic, a context that is not favorable to senior profiles, this scheme would make it possible to encourage the hiring of people aged 57 who are far from employment to reintegrate into the labor market.

The senior fixed-term contract to encourage the return to work of jobseekers close to retirement to enable them to supplement their rights to benefit from a full-rate pension for a period of 36 months (including renewals), as opposed to the usual 18 months with the "classic" fixed-term contract. Provided that the persons are aged 57 and over, registered for more than three months as a jobseeker or benefiting from a professional security contract (CSP) following an economic redundancy.

The employment skills pathway (PEC) for people in difficulty, which can be extended, if a fixed-term contract has been concluded, up to a total duration of 5 years (instead of 2 years) for people aged 50.

The professionalization contract: employment contract concluded between an employer and an employee to acquire a professional qualification (diploma, title, certificate of professional qualification) recognized by the State and/or the professional branch.

#### 3.2.2.4 POLAND

Pursuant to Article 39 of the Polish Labor Code, pre-retirement protection means that the employer may not terminate the employment contract if the employee (during the employment period) is no more than 4 years before reaching the retirement age. Not only is it forbidden to terminate the contract with a senior, in principle such an employee cannot change the terms of the employment contract - apart from a few exceptions, clearly defined in law. The current retirement age, which applies from October 1, 2017, is 60 for women and 65 for men. This is the main law protecting 50+ employees in Poland. However, this protection only works in the case of an employment contract.

In 2019, just before the pandemic, work was undertaken to give 50+ employees more privileges (more breaks, more flexible working hours, longer vacation)<sup>45</sup>. These changes were developed by the Social Dialogue Council together with selected trade unions. Unfortunately, this work was interrupted by the pandemic.

### 3.2.2.5 SLOVENIA

As many as 99.8 percent of all companies in Slovenia are small and medium-sized companies. (<https://www.gov.si/teme/mala-in-srednje-velika-podjetja/>)

The work activity of older workers (55+) is an increasingly topical topic, as the average life expectancy of people is increasing, and with this, labor legislation is also being adjusted. According to the Labour Relations Act (ZDR-1), older workers have special protection. The purpose of protecting older workers is to prevent them from being discriminated against in hiring and firing. The prohibition of discrimination based on age, as a personal circumstance, comes from Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, as the highest legal act, which was also confirmed by the judgment of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia. Article 6 of the ZDR-1 also explicitly stipulates that the employer must provide the same treatment to the job seeker during employment or to the worker during the duration of the employment relationship and in connection with the termination of the employment contract, regardless of age. Furthermore, age is also considered as an unjustified reason for regular termination of an employment contract.

Additional rights and protection belonging to older workers (<https://www.pravozavse.si/pravice-in-varstvo-starejsih-delavcev/>)

- An older worker is entitled to at least three additional days of annual leave.
- An older worker can enter into an employment contract or have the right to start working part-time in the same or another suitable position if he partially retires.
- The employer may not assign overtime or night work to an older employee without the employee's written consent (night work is considered work between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. the next day, if the working time schedule specifies a night shift, it is considered night work for eight continuous hours between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. the following day).
- At the same time as the employment contract, the worker can also sign the consent for night work, which could possibly even be part of the employment contract, but this consent must be explicit (proper diction). However, such consent cannot be permanent, or it cannot mean that the employee waives the possibility of refusing night work for the entire duration of the employment contract. The worker can revoke his consent.

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<sup>45</sup> *Jak zachęcić seniorów do dłuższego pozostawania na rynku pracy?* (2020 Jan 7th) Forsal. <https://forsal.pl/artykuly/1447204,jak-zachecic-seniorow-do-dluzszego-pozostawania-na-ryнку-pracy.html>

- If the employer orders work to an older worker without the employee's written consent, it is sanctioned as a misdemeanor and for this case the law stipulates a fine for the employer.
- Specific protection against termination

Extending work activity: measures and incentives that will ensure more suitable conditions for work and greater motivation for seniors 55+ ([https://www.gzs.si/skupne\\_naloge/staliska\\_in\\_komentarij/Novice/ArticleId/66597/podaljseva\\_nje-delovne-aktivnosti-ukrepi-in-spodbude-ki-bodo-zagotavljali-primernejse-pogoje-za-delo-in-vecjo-motiviranost-starejsih-nad-55-let](https://www.gzs.si/skupne_naloge/staliska_in_komentarij/Novice/ArticleId/66597/podaljseva_nje-delovne-aktivnosti-ukrepi-in-spodbude-ki-bodo-zagotavljali-primernejse-pogoje-za-delo-in-vecjo-motiviranost-starejsih-nad-55-let))

The goals are:

- increasing the work activity rate of older employees from 41% in 2016 to at least 50% by 2025.
- increasing access to education and training for older employees from 5% in 2016 to at least 10% by 2025.
- motivating society for greater respect for older employees in Slovenia.

It is in the interest of the Chamber of Commerce to actively connect with the economy and supporting institutions and regulate the legislative area to achieve goals related to greater involvement of older employees and greater accessibility to educational activities for older employees, by motivating the entire society for greater respect for older employees through:

- overcoming prejudices about older employees: the importance of exercising the potential of older people, their talents, experience and ethics;
- motivation for changes: highlighting the advantages of active seniors, rewarding good practices;
- creation of workplace improvements: adaptability of working conditions, ergonomics;
- emphasis on the importance of lifelong learning, acquiring and transferring knowledge and experience;
- health benefits according to the characteristics of the older working population;
- communication and cooperation: quality of work and life of the older active population.

## 3.3. Best training practice at private and public level

### 3.3.1 General findings about best practice at private and public level (all partner countries)

National Digital Skills and Jobs Coalitions exist in Belgium, in France and in Slovenia. In **Belgium** the Coalition is coordinated by a Governing Board which includes: Digital Champion Saskia Van Uffelen, the Digitalisation office of the Belgian Federal Government, Digital Minds, Agoria, and UQ.works. The work on digital skills and jobs has been coordinated nationally by Saskia van Uffelen, in her role as Digital Champion for Belgium (program) since 2011.

In **Finland** the Act on the Service Centre for Continuous Learning and Employment was recently established to meet the needs of the working life and the needs of the employees in working life, and it works under the Finnish National Agency for Education. Public sector in Finland offers a wide range of courses and training in digital skills that are open to all citizens. They offer, inter alia, courses for senior citizens in using electronic devices, personalised guidance on digital skills and the basics of computer science. A wide range of MOOCs are offered by higher education institutions in which citizens can develop the skills necessary in the working life. Moreover, open universities offer both independent study units as well as more comprehensive study modules. Also summer universities offer several courses from basic to more advanced digital skills in the working life. The Employment office offers training for job seekers when they, for example, need to gain better digital skills in order to become employed. In the private sector there are many training sectors that offer training for the working life. The Finnish organisation for entrepreneurs offers a training academy that is a collection of training sessions, webinars and online courses tailored for entrepreneurs. They offer, inter alia, training in the use of digital tools.

In **France** the French coalition in favor of skills and jobs was set up in 2016 and MEDEF was appointed by the European Commission to be its coordinator and facilitator. Companies in the digital sector have every interest in rebalancing their age pyramid in favour of seniors. Web@cadémie, Simplon.co, Webforce3 or Le Wagon train people who are far from employment, and in particular older people in the process of retraining, in the main computer languages in a few weeks or months. In France as well a governmental initiative, the Personal Training Account (PTA) allows employees to acquire training rights that can be used throughout working life to finance training.

In **Poland** currently, employee training is largely dealt with by labor offices, but this applies to the activation of people looking for employment, regardless of age.

In **Slovenia** the Slovenian Digital Coalition was established in 2016 as a multi-stakeholder platform following a national-level agreement during the 11th Slovenian Business Summit on the topic of the digitalisation of economy. The Digital Coalition of Slovenia aims to streamline the country's digital transformation processes and support the Slovenian strategic framework adopted by Slovenia, [Digital Slovenia 2020](#). The Coalition brings together

stakeholders throughout the public and private sector (trade and industry, research and development, civil society and public institutions). With the Slovenian Digital Coalition - digitalna.si, all stakeholders gain faster and more effective digital advances in the development and digital transformation of Slovenia.

### 3.3.2 Best training practices at private and public level (per country)

#### 3.3.2.1 BELGIUM

##### Belgium - National Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition<sup>46</sup>

The first Belgium National Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition was created back in 2014. To adapt the Belgian Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition to the changed world, the Coalition was re-launched on 2 November 2020. The multi-stakeholder partnership focuses on tackling the digital skills shortage and aims to upskill and reskill citizens and workforce so as to enable the development of skills for all and the digital transformation of economy and society. National and regional representatives of academia, education sectors, industry, the public service, and the non-profit sector are invited to participate with valuable contributions to ensure that Belgium joins in the European effort to leverage the rewards of digitisation.

The Coalition is coordinated by a Governing Board which includes: Digital Champion Saskia Van Uffelen, the Digitalisation office of the Belgian Federal Government, Digital Minds, Agoria, and UQ.works. The work on digital skills and jobs has been coordinated nationally by Saskia van Uffelen, in her role as Digital Champion for Belgium since 2011.

##### Digital skills and jobs priorities

In the area of Digital Skills and Jobs, the Coalition created the programme DigitalChampions.be, an alliance, which brought together various stakeholders from the public and private sector, as well as educators. The initiatives target all citizens, irrespective of their age and background, with the aim of strengthening and developing digital skills in a larger segment of the population. Each organisation linked to DigitalChampions.be provides its activities explicitly online so that any citizen can access them. Belgium has 12 DSJC pledges registered already.

##### The road ahead for the Belgian Coalition: outcome paper

It is within this context that the Belgian Community-led Event sought to address key questions for the growth and evolution of the Belgian National Coalition. With digitalization impacting both low- and high-skilled labour, estimates of the Belgian National Coalitions show that 4.5 million

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<sup>46</sup> <https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/about/national-coalitions/belgium-national-digital-skills-and-jobs-coalition>



of the Belgian labour force is at risk if they do not increase their digital competences in the near future.

The Community-led event highlighted the urgent need of fostering basic and advanced digital skills with a horizontal approach. For example, digital skills actions taken in education (which includes training) will lead to an impact across all areas.

### 3.3.2.2 FINLAND

Even though a fairly high number of adults participate in adult education, the ones that would need the education the most, are not taking part in it ([https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/164328/VNTEAS\\_2022\\_59.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/164328/VNTEAS_2022_59.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)). Those with higher education and higher positions in working life tend to educate themselves more. Another challenge that Finland faces lies within its education system which encourages people to have a degree also in sectors where shorter training would serve its purpose better. Moreover, according to OECD, Finland should diversify its education and training provision, develop tailored training programmes to meet the needs of the working life, and make participation in continuing professional training more attractive. The overall survey of adult education hasn't been clearly mapped out which makes it challenging to form a coherent picture of what there is to offer. However, the adult education system is advanced in Finland as in other Nordic countries, and each educational level offers study opportunities to gain better skills for the working life. Educational institutions and tertiary education are the key providers of continuous learning but the private sector also offers a wide range of courses and training for the working life.

The Act on the Service Centre for Continuous Learning and Employment was recently established to meet the needs of the working life and the needs of the employees in working life, and it works under the Finnish National Agency for Education. The centre analyses competence and labour market needs of working life; finances education and training for working-age people; develops information, advisory and guidance services, and supports regional and other cooperation. It also participated in the development of a digital service package for continuous learning.

Public sector in Finland offers a wide range of courses and training in digital skills that are open to all citizens. For example, adult education centres offer courses in digital skills from beginners to more advanced users. They offer, inter alia, courses for senior citizens in using electronic devices, personalised guidance on digital skills and the basics of computer science. Tertiary education also has a major role in offering training for adults. As an example, a wide range of MOOCs are offered by higher education institutions in which citizens can develop the skills necessary in the working life. Moreover, open universities offer both independent study units as well as more comprehensive study modules. Also summer universities offer several courses from basic to more advanced digital skills in the working life. The Employment office offers training for job seekers when they, for example, need to gain better digital skills in order to become employed.

In the private sector there are many training sectors that offer training for the working life. For example, the Finnish organisation for entrepreneurs offers a training academy that is a collection of training sessions, webinars and online courses tailored for entrepreneurs. They offer, inter alia, training in the use of digital tools. Trade unions offer specific training to its members and the employers themselves train their personnel to maintain the skills needed in the field. Many training programmes are based on different projects which often target only a narrow segment of the workforce.

### 3.3.2.3 FRANCE

France – National Digital Skills and Job Coalition <sup>47</sup>

To meet all the challenges linked to the digital transformation, the French coalition in favor of skills and jobs was set up in 2016 and the MEDEF was appointed by the European Commission to be its coordinator and facilitator. Today, more than 200 actors from different backgrounds have joined this coalition and are working together, they are the following; Adecco, l'AFPA, l'Agence du numérique, l'APEC, l'association Pasc@line, la CFTD, le Cigref, la Grande École du Numérique, Groupe BPCE, le Groupe des fédérations industrielles, le ministère de l'Éducation nationale, la Région Grand Est, Simplon, Sodexo, l'Union des industries chimiques (UIC), etc. They co-create projects such as the following with the Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle (DGEFP) signed an employment and skills commitment agreement (EDEC) on 19 November 2019.

Inclusion of all in a changing society: digital technology is part of our daily lives and not mastering basic digital skills leads to illiteracy (45% of EU citizens are digitally illiterate) and consequently to isolation. Not giving everyone a basic set of digital skills means leaving some people deliberately by the wayside.

Disseminate a digital culture to all and give everyone, from a very young age, the keys to understanding and creativity in a digital world (access to a wealth of information requiring relevant sorting, a critical view of information content, the ability to interact, create, innovate, etc.).

Supporting economic change in terms of jobs and skills. It will be necessary to ensure that companies that carry out their digital transformation find the skills and talents to embody it: without qualified men and women, no desire for transformation will be achieved. And this is true for companies whose core business is digital as well as for companies from the so-called traditional economy.

The role of the French coalition is triple, firstly to identify and promote initiatives and good practices. Secondly, to federate all local and national actors active in the digital field (administrations, associations, NGOs, professional organizations, companies, unions, etc.). And finally to carry out concrete actions on the whole territory.

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<sup>47</sup> [la-coalition-francaise.pdf \(french-digital-coalition.fr\)](#)

According to the Pôle Emploi's 2019 Labour Needs Survey, 58% of hiring projects in the IT job families are considered "difficult". Most companies have embarked on a vast digital transformation plan, creating tensions for certain profiles in development, website creation or community management.

To overcome this shortage, recruiters have broadened their search beyond the typical profile of the young engineer freshly graduated from a top school. Companies in the digital sector have every interest in rebalancing their age pyramid in favour of seniors. According to the latest Apec Syntec Numérique barometer, 25.7% of employees in the sector are over 45, compared to 41.5% for the economy. In order to meet this demand, a myriad of code schools have sprung up throughout the country. Web@cadémie, Simplon.co, Webforce3 or Le Wagon train people who are far from employment, and in particular older people in the process of retraining, in the main computer languages in a few weeks or months.

Additionally, a governmental initiative, the Personal Training Account (PTA) allows employees to acquire training rights that can be used throughout working life to finance training.

#### 3.3.2.4 POLAND

Vocational training for people aged 50+ was very fashionable in Poland at the time of the European Social Fund. At that time, a lot of private vocational training schools for various groups at risk of exclusion were established. They mainly dealt with trainings allowing for retraining and adapting to the requirements of a new job. Among other things, the focus was on ICT and language skills. This was related to the significant facilitation of the process of financing such projects from the European Union funds.

These types of projects peaked in 2015, and then when funding ran out, they began to disappear or transform. For example, many language schools 10 years ago offered even 100% subsidized courses for seniors and promoted them strongly. Currently, it is practically impossible to find such activities. The bottom line is simple: the business model is exhausted. Currently, employee training is largely dealt with by labor offices, but this applies to the activation of people looking for employment, regardless of age.

#### 3.3.2.5 SLOVENIA

##### Slovenia - Digital Coalition

The Slovenian Digital Coalition (Digitalna Slovenija) was established in 2016 as a multi-stakeholder platform following a national-level agreement during the 11th Slovenian Business Summit on the topic of the digitalisation of economy. The Digital Coalition of Slovenia aims to streamline the country's digital transformation processes and support the Slovenian strategic framework adopted by Slovenia, [Digital Slovenia 2020](#). The Coalition brings together stakeholders throughout the public and private sector (trade and industry, research and development, civil society and public institutions).

With the Slovenian Digital Coalition - digitalna.si, all stakeholders gain faster and more effective digital advances in the development and digital transformation of Slovenia. The Slovenian Digital Coalition (digitalna.si) is focussed on attaining cross-sector multiplier impact that accelerates the development of the digital society and exploits opportunities for development of ICT and the internet. This will entail a carefully coordinated digital transformation of Slovenia with the objectives to:

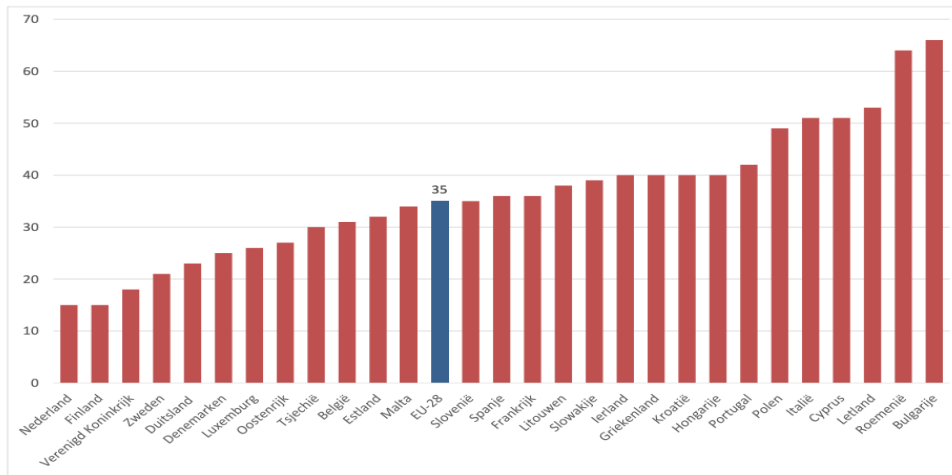
- accelerate the digital transformation of Slovenia;
- coordinate development policies and measures for capacity building among stakeholders in the digitalisation of Slovenia;
- increase economic performance and employment opportunities;
- achieve synergistic and cross-sector multiplier development impact;
- greater uptake of ICT solutions, services and infrastructure, which will be based on open, secure, private, non-discriminatory access and will contribute to reducing environmental impacts;
- improve digital literacy and digital competence across target populations according to identified gaps;
- improve e-skills, e-inclusion and the overall quality of life for the population;
- better integrate ICT in education and lifelong learning for inclusion in the digital society;
- develop digital content and services in Slovenian, and for language technologies and resources in Slovenian;
- increased uptake of e-services (e-government, e-banking, e-health ...) and accelerated deployment of ICT within the public sector. (<https://www.digitalna.si/en/digital-coalition>)

## 4. Conclusions: Ageing workforce and digital transition

### 4.1. BELGIUM

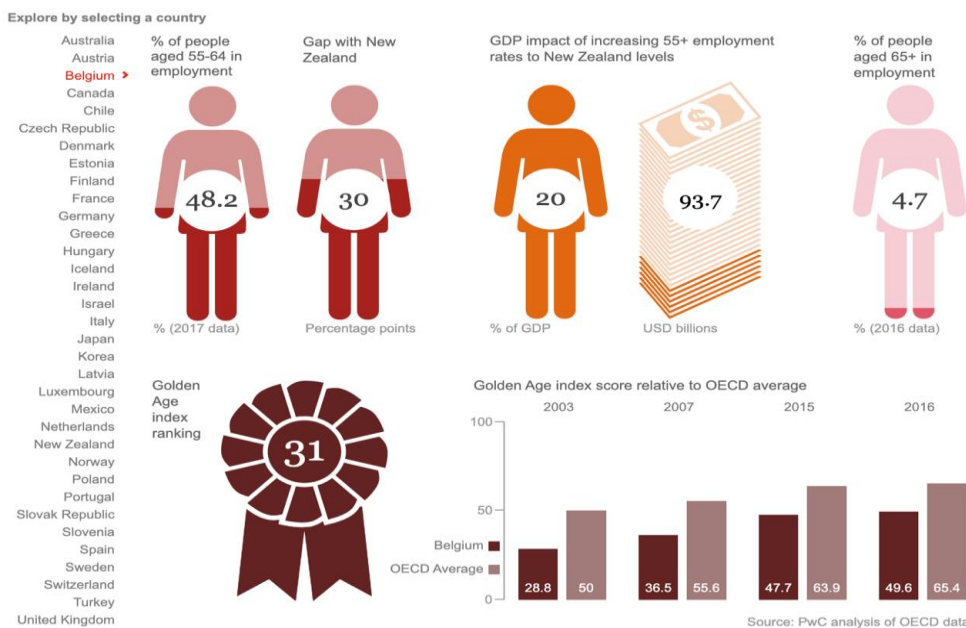
In 2019, 35 % of the EU workforce — i.e. people who work or seeking employment — in the 25 to 64 age group, representing more than 75 million represents people, not on at least basic digital skills (or their skills could not be assessed because they have not been able to have not used the internet for months). Within the EU there are significant differences between Member States: Belgium scores with 31% less than the EU-average.

**Figure 36: Percentage of employed labor force without at least basic digital skills in 2019<sup>48</sup>**



The economic activity of people 55+ in Belgium is one of the lowest in the OECD<sup>49</sup>. Belgium still ranks 31th out of 35 countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the PwC "Golden Age Index" ranking, which assesses the level of using the potential of people aged over 55 on the labor market. According to the estimates increasing the professional activity of this group to the level of the countries taking the podium in the ranking would bring Belgium a GDP growth of up to USD 93,7 billion in the long term.

**Figure 37: Golden age index (Belgium)**



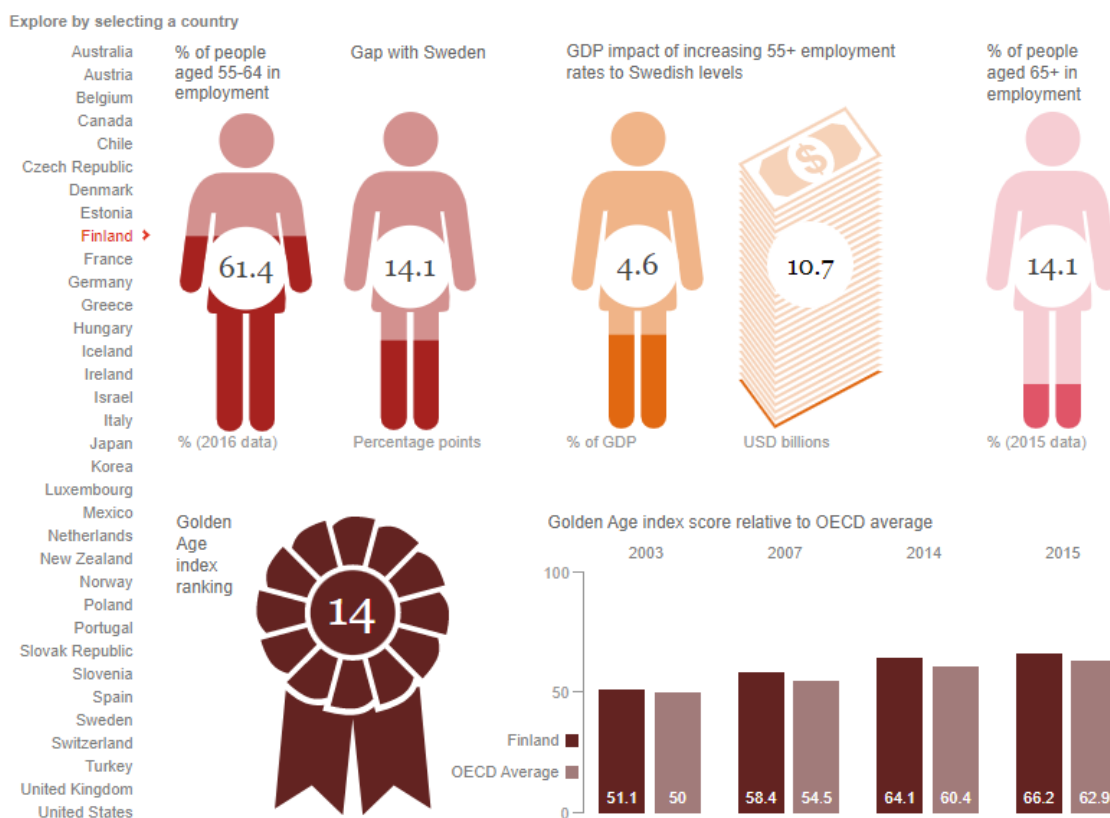
<sup>48</sup> [https://www.eca.europa.eu/lists/ecadocuments/rw21\\_02/rw\\_digital\\_skills\\_nl.pdf](https://www.eca.europa.eu/lists/ecadocuments/rw21_02/rw_digital_skills_nl.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.pwc.co.uk/services/economics/insights/golden-age-index.html>

## 4.2. FINLAND

Finland ranks 14th out of 35 countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the PwC "Golden Age Index" ranking, which assesses the level of using the potential of people aged over 55 on the labor market. According to the estimates increasing the professional activity of this group to the level of the countries taking the podium in the ranking would bring France a GDP growth of up to 10.7 billion in the long term.

**Figure 38: Golden age index (Finland)**

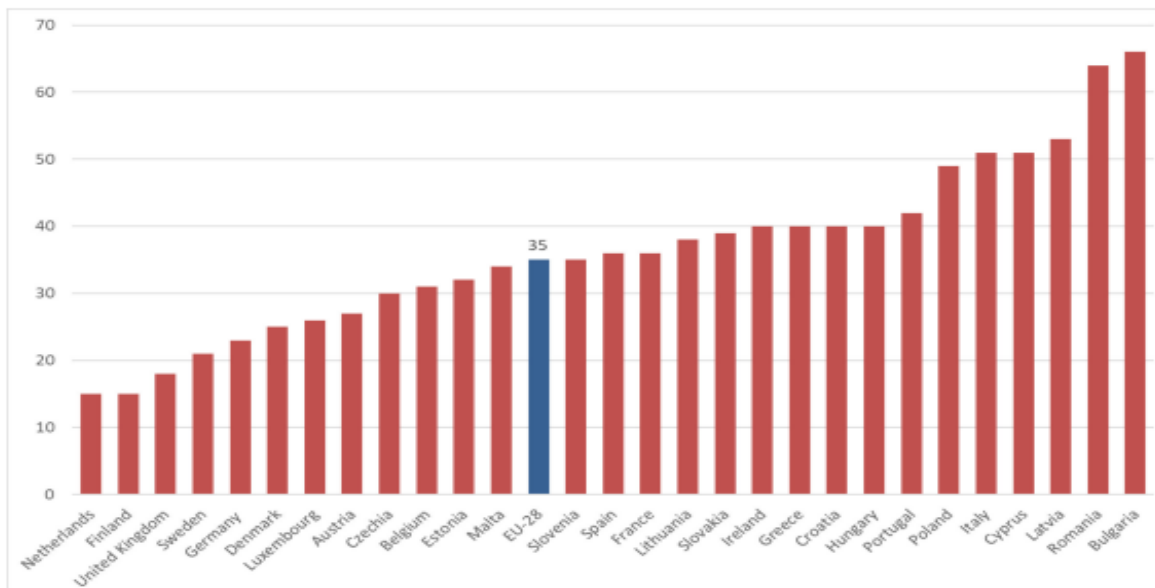


<https://www.pwc.com/sk/en/inovacie/golden-age-index.html>

## 4.3. FRANCE

In 2019, 35 % of the EU workforce — i.e., people who work or seeking employment — in the 25 to 64 age group, representing more than 75 million represents people, not on at least basic digital skills (or their skills could not be assessed because they have not been able to have not used the internet for months). Within the EU there are significant differences between Member States: France scores just above the EU-average with a 36 %.

**Figure 39: Percentage of the active labor workforce without at least basic digital skills in 2019 (EU)**



**Figure 40: Golden age index (France)**

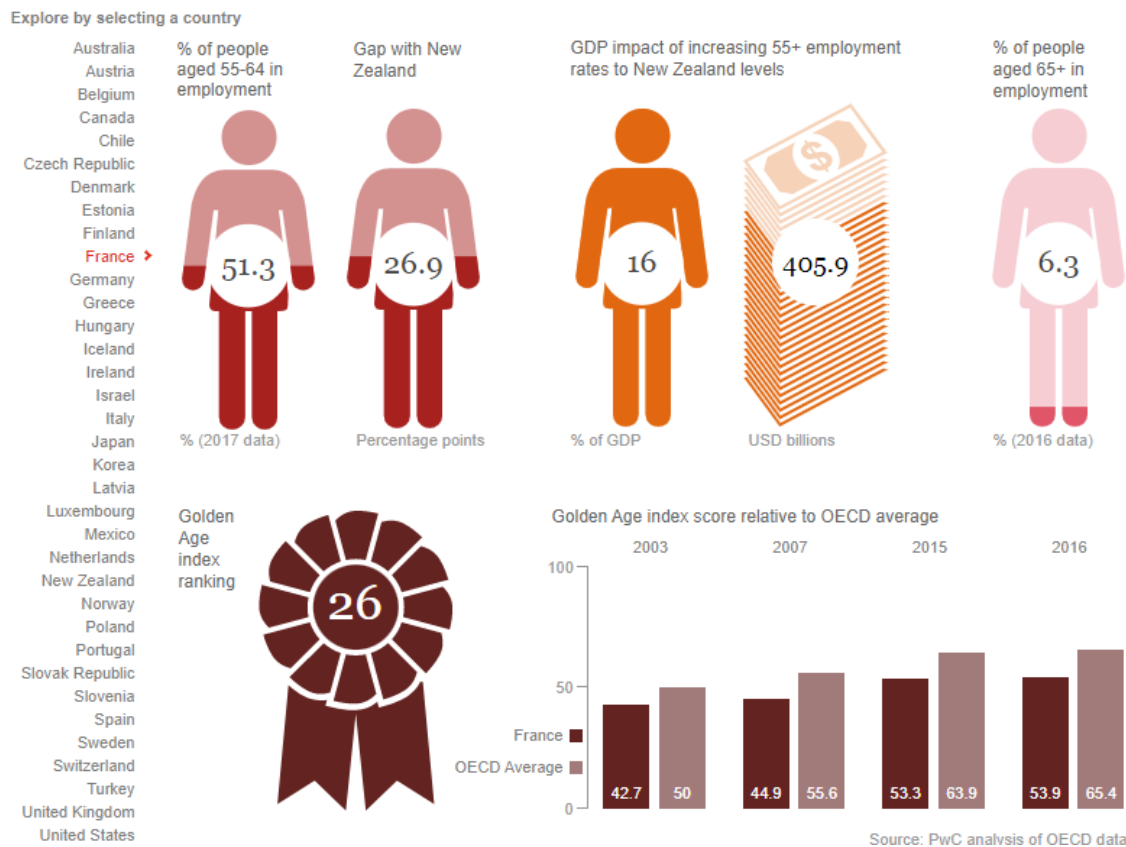


Chart 10: France Golden Age Index: PwC<sup>50</sup>

## 4.4 POLAND

Digital competences are an increasingly important issue for today's employees and employers. Although expert analyzes of the level of these competences in Poland are alarming, as many as 2/3 of Poles positively assess their proficiency in the use of technology in their professional lives - according to the latest research by Pracuj.pl. In the "Digital Career Evolution" report<sup>51</sup>, portal experts look at the role of digital solutions in our daily work and employees' views on the future of technology.

In the "People 45+ and technologies at work" section, we learn:

<sup>50</sup> [Golden Age Index: PwC UK](#)

<sup>51</sup> Cyfrowa ewolucja kariery (2021). Pracuj.pl [https://prowly-uploads.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/uploads/landing\\_page\\_image/image/329760/b202b17ccf86b7e2e49ebc8ebeddf1f.pdf](https://prowly-uploads.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/uploads/landing_page_image/image/329760/b202b17ccf86b7e2e49ebc8ebeddf1f.pdf)



- People aged 45+ do not rate their digital competences lower than other groups, although they are aware that the development of technology poses greater professional challenges to them than to younger people.
- The oldest respondents most often from all groups expect a large impact of technology and digital competences on the nearest future of the labor market.
- This group of respondents is the least likely to support access to social media at work for private purposes. Most often, he does not use them at work at all.

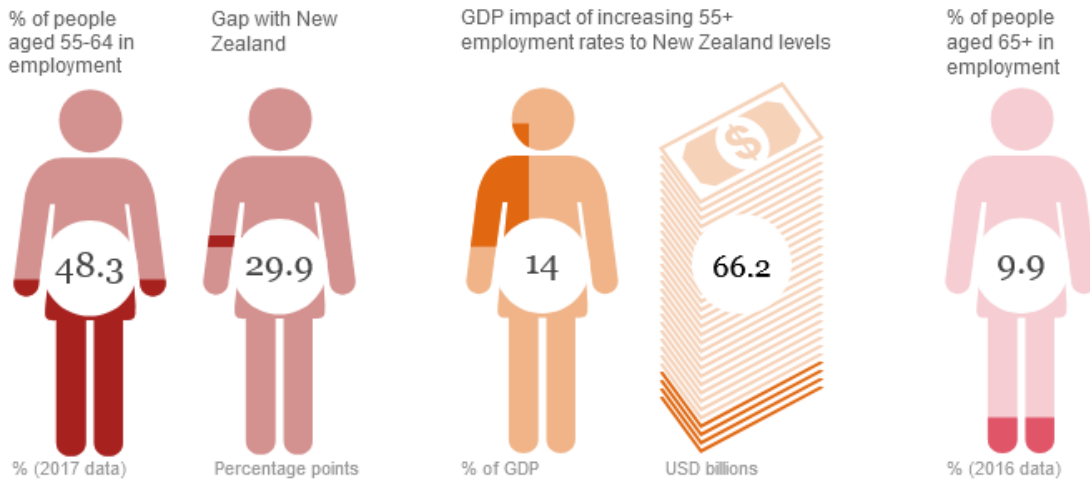
Employees aged 45+ most often believe that employers should support employees in acquiring technological competences (79%). This attitude, understandably, is connected with the fact that they also most often express the opinion that in the near future employees will have to train more and more often in order to stay in the labor market (79%). It is worth noting that despite the stereotypical perception of 45+ employees as the most conservative, they are the greatest supporters of employers supporting women in developing careers in technical fields, which are stereotypically considered "male" (68%).

The economic activity of people 55+ in Poland is one of the lowest in the OECD<sup>52</sup>. Poland still ranks 30th out of 35 countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the PwC "Golden Age Index" ranking, which assesses the level of using the potential of people aged over 55 on the labor market. According to the estimates increasing the professional activity of this group to the level of the countries taking the podium in the ranking would bring Poland a GDP growth of up to USD 66 billion in the long term.

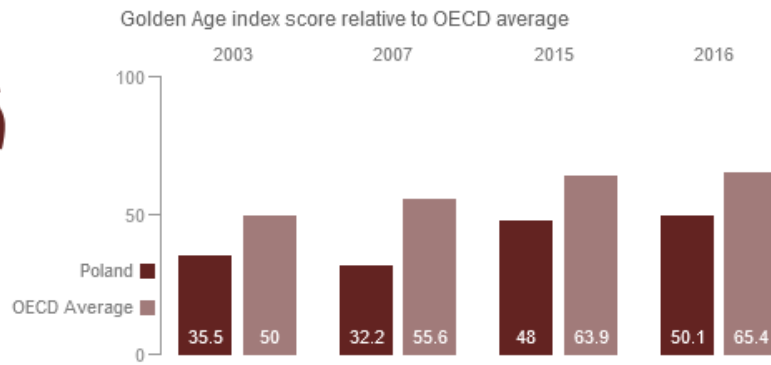
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<sup>52</sup> Golden Age Index (2018). PwC. <https://www.pwc.com/sk/en/inovacie/golden-age-index.html>

**Figure 41: Golden age index (Poland)**



Golden Age index ranking



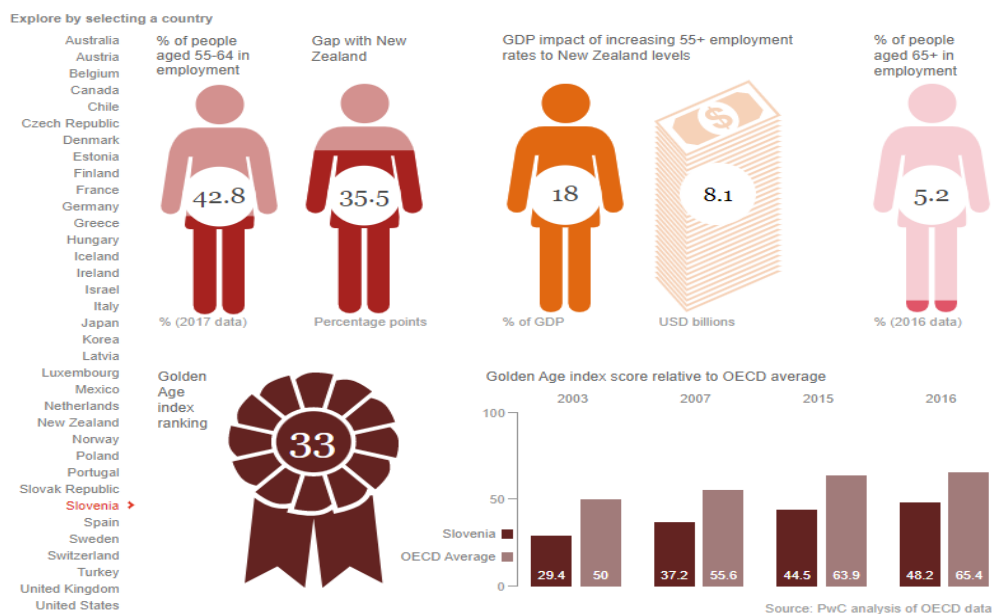
Source: PwC analysis of OECD data

## 4.5 SLOVENIA

In 2019, 35 % of the EU workforce — i.e. people who work or seeking employment — in the 25 to 64 age group, representing more than 75 million represents people, not on at least basic digital skills (or their skills could not be assessed because they have not been able to have not used the internet for months). Within the EU there are significant differences between Member States: Slovenia scores with 35% the EU-average.

The economic activity of people 55+ in Slovenia is one of the lowest in the OECD<sup>53</sup>. Slovenia ranks 33 out of 35 countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the PwC "Golden Age Index" ranking, which assesses the level of using the potential of people aged over 55 on the labor market. According to the estimates increasing the professional activity of this group to the level of the countries taking the podium in the ranking would bring Slovenia a GDP growth of up to USD 8,1 billion in the long term.

**Figure 42: Golden age index (Slovenia)**



<https://www.pwc.co.uk/services/economics/insights/golden-age-index.html>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.pwc.co.uk/services/economics/insights/golden-age-index.html>

## 5. Summary

**Belgium's** policy makers are – more than ever before – aware of the (urgent) need to focus on digital ageing. The age for retiring slowly moves toward 67. However, a lot of exceptions to retire earlier are still possible. Re-activating people absent due to longterm illness is a priority, even as keeping people as long as possible “working”. This is the general case, and not specific significant different for clerks, working in all kind of sectors. However finding political consensus to take measures has always been difficult in Belgium, especially now the government is composed of 7 political parties. The fact that labour is also regionalized, makes that the national government has to cooperate with the regional governments.

**Finland's** policy makers are well aware of the need to focus on developing digital skills in the ageing workforce. They acknowledge the fact that without proper digital skills, it becomes more challenging to get employed again in case of losing a job or having been laid off. However, as the level of digital competence is already high compared to many other European countries, it is seen that the existing measures are effective enough. Digital competence has been written into the curricula of each school level, and the skills and knowledge people gain through work are also valued very highly. Employers also provide training for their employees at their workplaces to increase the skills needed at work. Therefore it is not seen as critical to have a national programme for developing the digital skills of the citizens.

On the other hand, the age structure in Finland will change in the future as bigger generations will reach retirement age. The fact is that already many sectors are facing labour shortages, and the competition of highly skilled employees will tighten even more in the future. Rural areas have faced problems in hiring highly educated professionals as they tend to gravitate toward bigger cities where services are closer. Thus it is important to keep the employees in working life as long as possible and to find ways to bring the unemployed back to employment by updating their skills according to the needs of the all the time digitalising working life.

**France's** policy makers are more than ever aware of the necessity to maintain 50 + employees in the workforce. Thus, a need to acknowledge the prevailing specific difficulties that can hinder their continued employment or their return to work. Firstly, the weight of negative representations linked to age. Life expectancy is increasing, but stereotypes remain. Age is thus, along with gender, the main reason given for experiences of work-related discrimination. Another barrier is health. More than half of the people who left work prematurely attribute their decision to health problems. More broadly, difficult, or even painful working conditions, without job adjustments, can sometimes discourage people from remaining in work. France has been pro-active on these challenges proposing multiples solutions and economic adjustments such as CDI inclusion, but it remains an on-going governmental priority. The legal retirement age is going through new changes linked to the recent French presidential elections; the legislation will progressively pass the legal retirement age from 63 to 65. However, a lot of exceptions to retire earlier are still possible. Overall, most of the studies identify a specific need to develop the digital competences of employees 50 + and particularly the need for **basic digital skills**. Basic digital skills include being able to **communicate via email or social media**, to **create and edit documents digital documents** and to **search for information**, or to **protect**

**personal information online.** 98% of workplaces require managers and 90% that professionals technicians, clerical workers or skilled agricultural workers should have at least basic digital skills.

Finally, we would like to add that the big problem in obtaining and reliable data is that **Poland** is not currently focusing on the professional activation of older people. You can find much more data and studies from 2012-2015 than today. It is clear that this is not a priority for the current government. It is also related to the fact that unemployment in Poland is relatively low compared to the entire European Union<sup>54</sup> and the government does not see any interest in supporting working seniors (assuming that they will also find a job without support). This translates into a meager quantity and quality of data.

Polish society is aging, which is typical of most European countries. This means that the labor force participation of older people increases when one looks at the data. There are more and more older people, so they are present in the labor market. However, the data may not show the nuances of the challenges faced by the senior worker. Unfortunately, the Polish government and its institutions do not publish almost anything on this subject. A specific status quo has been maintained for years in which low unemployment allows the rulers not to deal with the subject of professional activity of seniors, despite the fact that they constitute an increasing group of employees and, consequently, an increasing challenge.

The Office of the Government of the Republic of **Slovenia** for Digital Transformation prepared the first systemic law for the comprehensive regulation of the field of digital competences. The Act on the Promotion of Digital Inclusion (ZSDV) was published as the first systemic act in the official gazette on March 11, 2022. The Government Service for Digital Transformation regulates the area of acquiring digital competences with the act, as the act is the basis for launching a national e-literacy program with the aim reducing digital exclusion and inequality - a goal pursued by all of Europe. (<https://skills-jobs.digitalna.si/digitalna-znanja/strategije/zakon-o-spodbujanju-digitalne-vkljucenosti-prvi-sistemski-zakon-za-celovito-urejanje-podrocja-digitalnih-kompetenc-497D6qmB>)

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<sup>54</sup> 2,9% in Poland and 6,4% in EU in December 2021 (according to Eurostat).

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