

SPOTLIGHT ON JOBS AND SKILLS SLOVENIA

2025

Introduction

Drawing on its rich country-level skills intelligence, Cedefop develops its Spotlights on jobs and skills for EU-27 Member States, Iceland and Norway. The Spotlights provide insights into the current labour market landscape, future trends, and skills anticipation in each country. The analysis is based on Cedefop's skills intelligence online tool, its skills forecast, the European Skills Index (ESI), online job advertisements, sectoral and occupational skills intelligence, and country-specific skills anticipation reports.

Recent employment developments

Over the past decade, Slovenia has steadily reduced its unemployment rate, reflecting a sustained recovery from the global financial crisis. After a temporary increase during the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment declined to 4% by 2023 – below pre-pandemic levels and outperforming the EU average of 6%. While the long-term unemployment rate was at its lowest since 2011 (38%), it has consistently been above the EU average (35% in 2023), highlighting the need for activation measures.

In 2023, four sectors ⁽¹⁾ jointly employed over half of the Slovenian workforce: manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, education, and health and social care (Figure 1). While the job market share of wholesale and retail trade aligns with the EU average of 13 %, the share of the workforce employed in manufacturing (23%) significantly exceeds the EU average (16%) and is one of the highest in the EU. This predominance is reflected in the sector's employment shares: manufacturing employs 65% of all technical labourers – one of the highest shares in the EU and much higher than the EU average of 28%.

In 2023, nearly two thirds of the workforce were employed as professionals, associate professionals, service and sales workers, and trade workers. Among these groups,

professionals represent the largest share, comprising 23% of the working population. Within professional employment, the largest occupation groups are teaching (6%), and research and engineering professionals (5%). The primacy of the manufacturing sector is visible in the 5% employment share of technical labourers – one of the highest shares in the EU and almost double the EU average of 3%.

In 2023, women accounted for 46% of the workforce. The gender distribution of employment has remained stable since 2014 and is similar to the EU average. Women are particularly well represented in the health and social care (79%) and education (76%) sectors, with employment shares exceeding the EU average. Although they are not the majority, women account for 38% in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sectors – much higher than the EU average (30%). In 2023, the proportion of workers aged 25-49 still exceeded the EU average (61% compared with 57%), but this core age group has shrunk relatively quickly since 2014. The share of workers aged 50-64 is below the EU average (30% compared with 32%), but has been increasing at a faster pace. Demographic shifts over the past decade suggest that population ageing will become a significant challenge for Slovenia.

In 2023, medium-qualified individuals dominated the labour market, comprising 55% of the workforce (EU average 46%). The share of highly qualified people, at 37%, is close to the EU average (38%), while the share of low-qualified people, below 10%, is far below the EU average (16%). The overqualification rate of tertiary graduates was 23% in 2023, equal to the EU average. At 7%, the share of young people neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) was lower than the EU average of 9%. Nevertheless, efforts to integrate NEETs better into the labour market and education and training should continue.

⁽¹⁾ To learn more about the classification of sectors, occupations, and qualification levels discussed in this report, see Annex 2 of [Cedefop's skills forecast methodological framework](#) (April 2023).

Recent skills and learning developments

Of the [online job ads \(OJAs\)](#) advertised by employers in Slovenia in 2023, 70% were for a job in business services, much higher than the EU average of 51%. Employers used most of these OJAs (51%) to recruit staff for professional services, far above the EU average (15%). These trends show a shift towards a service economy (ICT, administrative and financial services) – a long-term European megatrend confirmed by Cedefop's European skills forecast. The three most sought-after occupations are elementary workers, service and sales workers, and professionals. The skills employers mentioned most in OJAs were accessing and analysing digital data, and monitoring, inspecting and testing.

According to Cedefop's 2024 [European Skills Index \(ESI\)](#), Slovenia is ranked sixth out of 31 countries, with a total score of 65 out of 100. The country progressed significantly from ninth place in 2017. Among the three ESI pillars, in 2024 Slovenia ranked highest in skills matching (Figure 2). Between 2017 and 2024, scores for long-term unemployment and the share of recent graduates in employment improved. From an EU perspective, the highest-ranking indicators are the activity rate of 25- to 54-year-olds (ranked first), and participation in VET (ranked second). However, performance on the indicator for adults with high digital skills is comparatively low (ranked 20th), and should be a policy concern, given that high digital skills are crucial in innovation-driving sectors.

In 2023, almost one in five people in Slovenia had above-basic digital skills (27% in the EU). Among the employed population, the share was higher (24 %), but was still far below the EU average of 33%. Those at the start of their careers, aged 25-34, were most likely to have above-basic skills (33%), but the share was lower than the EU average of 39%. The relatively high participation in education and training among the employed population (23% versus 14 % in the EU-27) could help close digital skills gaps. This high level of engagement in education and training, particularly among women and people aged 25-49, could boost skill levels in the country.

Future employment trends

Up to 2035, Cedefop skills forecast projects weak annual labour force growth of 0.8%, slightly above the EU average of 0.6 %. Only the 30-49 age group in the labour force is expected to contract, while all other cohorts are forecast to grow. Annual labour force growth will be highest (10%) for over-65-year-olds, demonstrating a clear shift towards an older workforce.

Aggregate employment is expected to decline by 1% between 2022 and 2035, primarily due to significant contractions in sectors such as education (-45%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (-34%), and construction (-22 %). Conversely, strong employment growth is projected in business and service sectors. The top three expanding sectors are ICT (48%), energy (25%), and health (16%). Employment in manufacturing – Slovenia's largest employer – is also forecast to grow by 6% by 2035.

Occupational trends mirror these sectoral shifts. Employment of professionals and elementary workers is forecast to increase by 16% and 13%, respectively. The top five occupations by forecast net employment growth are personal care workers (40%), science and engineering professionals (35%), ICT professionals (32%), labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing, and transport (31%), and assemblers (21%). Replacement needs, which reflect demand arising from workers who will retire or move to another job, will exceed employment growth in some labour market segments. Up to 2035, replacement demand will be high for nearly all occupations. This pressure to replenish the workforce, poses challenges and opportunities for targeted upskilling and workforce planning strategies.

Future skills and learning trends

Jobs requiring high qualifications made up 41% of employment in 2022. By 2035, this share is projected to rise to 51%, surpassing the EU average of 46%. The shift comes at the expense of rapidly decreasing employment shares of low-qualified jobs and, to a lesser extent, jobs requiring medium-level qualifications. In 2035, most job openings are expected in high-skilled non-manual positions. Replacement demand will drive almost all of these, with only 5% reflecting job openings linked to expanding employment, significantly below the projected EU average of 14%. Employment in elementary occupations is projected to grow by 13%, compared with a 1% increase for the EU as a whole.

The expected increasing demand for highly qualified labour in Slovenia is reflected in [employment growth in the high-tech economy](#), which is forecast to grow by 32% between 2022-2035, almost three times the EU average of 11%. The projected growth of employment in high-technology manufacturing (23%) is more than four times the EU average of 5%. These developments underline the potential for economic growth driven by technological innovation and increase the need for advanced digital skills and, more generally, upskilling and reskilling.

Expected skill shortages

According to Cedefop's Labour and Skills Shortage Index, labour shortages and hiring difficulties are expected to be highest for high-skilled and elementary occupations (Figure 3). Employers will face difficulty recruiting workers in in-demand occupations, such as personal care workers, labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport, and ICT professionals.

The index is highest for professionals, primarily because of employment growth and substantial replacement demand. Labour shortages in elementary occupations are driven by employment growth, high replacement demand, and an already

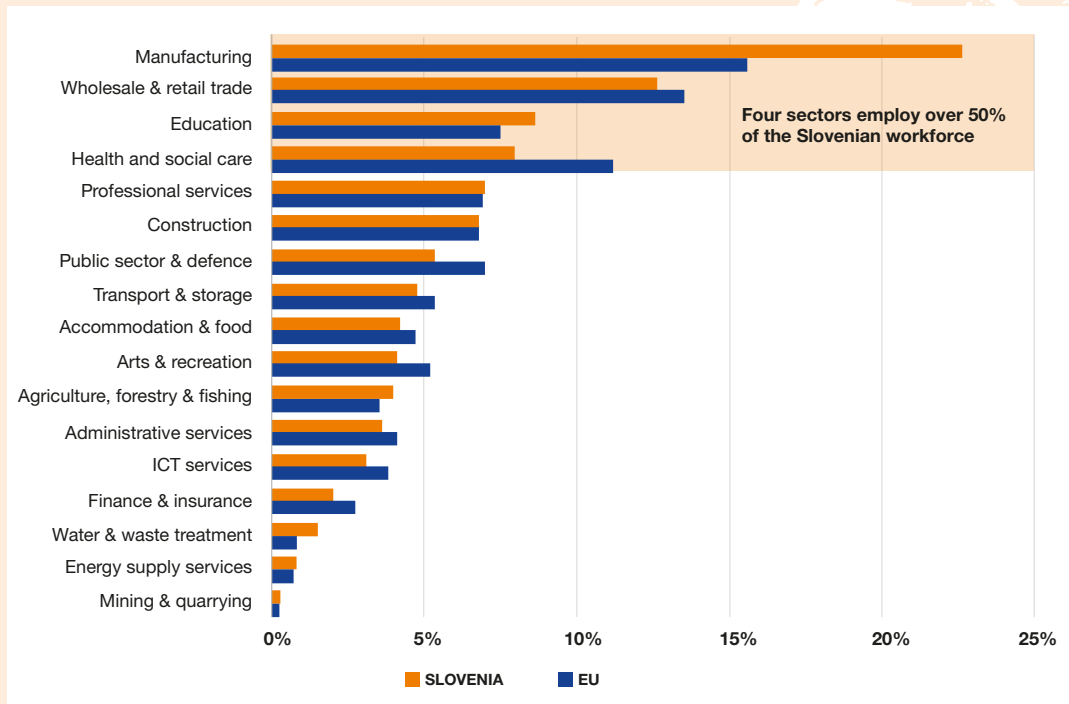
marked supply-demand gap. Compared with many other EU countries, there will be little or no labour and skills shortage for teaching professionals.



SLOVENIA

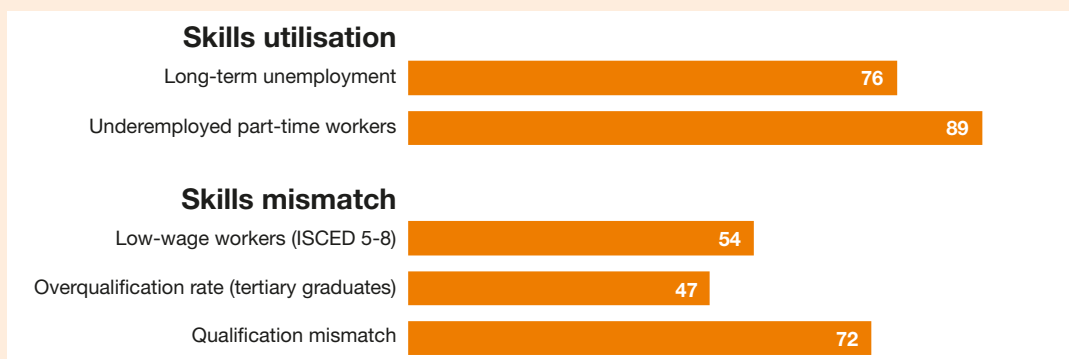
Jobs and skills in figures

Distribution of employment across sectors in Slovenia and in the EU, 2023, (%)



Source: [Cedefop skills intelligence tool](#).

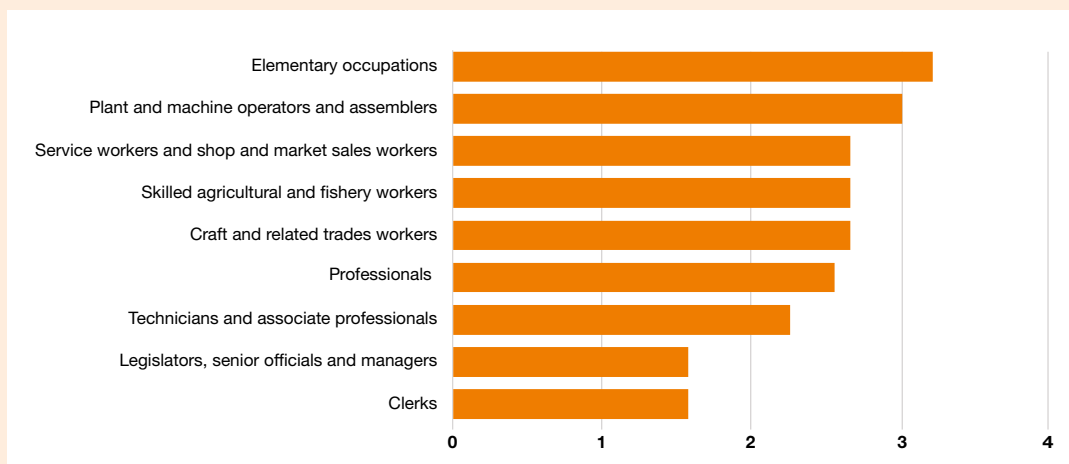
ESI skills matching pillar in Slovenia, 2024



NB: The ESI measures countries' 'distance to the ideal' performance, i.e. the highest achieved by any country over a period of seven years. The ideal performance is scaled to 100, with national scores computed and compared to that. Example: a score of 65 suggests that the country has reached 65% of the ideal performance, with 35% (100-65) room for improvement.

Source: Cedefop ESI.

Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index, Slovenia, 2022-35



NB: The labour shortage index is the simple average of the quartiles in each of the three pillars: (1) employment growth; (2) replacement demand; (3) supply/demand imbalance (IFIOD). A score of 4 indicates a higher level of shortage, and 1 no shortage. The outcome of the pillars is based on the relative evaluation in quartiles of the occupation (here for all EU-27).

Source: [Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index](#).



Further information

- Cedefop. (2021). [*Vocational education and training in Slovenia: short description*](#). Publications Office of the European Union.
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- Knavs, S., & Šlander, M. (2024). [*Implementing European priorities in VET: making national VET agile, flexible, innovative, attractive, inclusive and quality-assured: Slovenia*](#). Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives.

[Cedefop Skills intelligence tool](#)

[Cedefop Skills forecast](#)

[Cedefop Skills OVATE](#)

[Cedefop European Skills Index](#)

[Cedefop Labour and Skills Shortage Index](#)

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