Addressing the challenges of COVID-19

The ILO Skills Branch is supporting countries, workers, enterprises, and education and training institutions in their efforts to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 on skills development. Through facilitating innovative solutions and leveraging new technologies, the branch is supporting constituents worldwide to ensure the continuation of skills development amid the current crisis.
Governments, employers’ associations, and trade unions around the world want to improve the employability of workers, move young people into productive and decent work, and increase productivity through better, more relevant training. Yet, poor quality training and a chronic under-investment in skills prevent workers from getting the skills they need. To address these challenges, we need dynamic, integrated skills and lifelong learning ecosystems.

What is the challenge?

What is the goal?

Make lifelong learning a reality through effective policies and institutions

Support forward-looking skills development through industry-driven skills anticipation and matching

Scale up innovative and flexible learning programmes and pathways in the digital era

Develop skills for inclusive and diverse labour markets by expanding access to learning and career transition support

Promote work-based learning, quality apprenticeships and skills utilization

Why is it important?

The Branch supports Member States, as well as employers’ and workers’ organizations, as they develop and implement national and sectoral skills policies, strategies and programmes to promote employment, economic growth, and inclusive societies.

• Core work skills and technical skills help people enter the formal economy, gain economic empowerment, and develop careers and transition between jobs.

• Skills increase productivity and improve innovation capacity, especially as the pace of change accelerates.

• A well-skilled workforce is the basis for economic growth and social cohesion.

What does the branch do?

The ILO Skills and Employability Branch works to make education and training systems more flexible, diversified relevant and inclusive to labour market needs, and to improve skills development overall.

Research and knowledge management:

• Develops forward looking approaches for anticipating and matching skills needs

• Promotes social inclusion through education and training

• Establishes quality apprenticeships and recognition of prior learning systems

• Strengthens skills development systems

Development cooperation:

• Supports national, regional, and sectoral skills reform initiatives

• Supports ILO constituents in skill needs anticipation and planning at national and sectoral levels

• Develops the capacity of national constituents and public and private training providers

• Pilots innovative approaches to improve quality, market relevance, inclusiveness and employment outcomes of skills development programmes